

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

CULTURAL FELLOWSHIP IN INDIA
– HINDUS AND MUSALMANS OF INDIA
CALL IT POLITICS?

NOT BY POLITICS ALONE

BY
ATULANANDA CHAKRABARTI

FOREWORD BY
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THACKER, SPINK & Co. (1933) LD.,
3, ESPLANADE EAST,
CALCUTTA

First Edition, September 1944

Price Rs. 5/-

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PRINTED BY P. C. RAY AT SRI GOURANGA PRESS,
5, CHINTAMANI DAS LANE, CALCUTTA.
PUBLISHED BY THACKER, SPINK & CO. (1933) LTD.
3, ESPLANADE EAST, CALCUTTA.

FOREWORD

IT is not necessary that one should find one's self in agreement on every point with Mr. Chakrabarti or be willing to accept in all instances his interpretation of history, in order to recognize that his plea for unity is simple and sincere, and comes straight from the heart. Mr. Chakrabarti has devoted much of his time and his substance to this cause, and his unselfish and disinterested efforts have won the approbation of leading men in both communities. What he says has nothing to do with politics or with current controversies. He envisages a future world unity, and India as a microcosm with a corresponding unity of her own.

This appeal to our common humanity has nothing in it which could offend the most susceptible, to whatever community or party he may belong. I hope that it will have numerous readers.

MAURICE GWYER

Delhi,
December, 1943.

PREFACE

NOT to relate ourselves with Nature's life movement is not to know ourselves. To trace the destiny of life, as it goes on evolving, is a most necessary discipline for the mind. To read the story of man in this light is to cultivate the sense of the touch that makes the whole world kin. Such a pursuit not only trains the mind, also chastens it. Then we know how human unity is more than a piece of philosophy, how it is even a matter of sheer practical politics. And having had the wide vision, we easily stand nearer the stream of oneness that runs through the whole creation—all men, all life as well.

Unity will come natural, for Nature has it in her scheme of things. Humanity may yet be in the childhood with its excess of energy that in fretful periods bursts into wrangle and riot and war, spreading hatred, division and misery across the fair face of our planet. But after all love may 'not be a mere idea. It may rather be a real force in the affairs of men. Need it be forgotten that the Son of God proved his divinity by love! To be united in love, to be but human in our relation with others is the ideal set forth for us, and we are great as we reach that ideal.

Man was given the art of living together not a day later than he was brought into the world. Attachment to the community is implanted in his very being. This gift he has gone on improving, so that from limited to unlimited community his progress follows as a matter of course. Man's path of progress has been so mapped out that he can go out of the way only to get extinct. He is bound to wade through to unity. He can break away but apparently. Nature tolerates no frustration. Unity is an affair of her own, and she sees to it that her creative process is not altogether disturbed. Now and then, however, she may well allow man to play the rebel just to lend life to

her drama of Evolution, proceeding along unity, greater unity, still greater unity.

The future of man depends on what account he gives of the wisdom which he is made of, which marks him out as the latest model introduced by Nature in her order of creation. Man's unit of social life has ever been broadening. Already nationhood has nearly touched bottom and looks much like entering into a federation of nations, as the war approaches its end. India's task at the moment is very great and not the least delicate. She has to maintain a rhythm between her attaining the state of nationality and transcending into the realm of human unity, and all this in her own way, more as a spiritual than as a political fulfilment.

ATULANANDA CHAKRABARTI

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THE HUMAN OUTLOOK OF INDIAN CULTURE

THE earth is one. Humanity is one. The good God made them so. Compartments and labels are man-made. Yet through the veil of this diversity ever shines the life-giving rays of the radiant Father. Blessed are the few that see that radiance.

The world began with individuals. At first the individuals formed small groups. Then the smaller groups coalesced to form larger groups. Thus on and on marched progress. The whole height from individual to nation has been scaled. Today we wait on the last rung. Beyond it is the domain of one undivided humanity. The seer from age to age has visualised this goal, this domain ruled over by the Great Master. We who have never seen it use it merely as a catch phrase.

The scriptures of all religions have given us the ideal of Kingdom of Heaven on earth. They could not all have been dreaming. Or, if that be all a dream, it is but the finer vision of reality, the truth of the life below the surface.

The course of creation has run through millions and millions of years. Nature has evolved one creature after another in her joy of creation. So far man is the last word in animal evolution. In song and festival, in love and romance, he has given to creation a meaning and a music, a glory and a fulfilment, hitherto unknown. He has used brain, his reason, that unique faculty with which Nature endowed him. Today, having achieved so much, he stands and asks—what next?

Man began his career with a small body but a large brain. This brain he has gone on developing till he has well-nigh forgotten that there is a limit to it. There was a time when he only realised what his crude senses perceived—what his eyes saw, what his ears heard, what his touch felt. He can now see the minutest of things with his microscope, hear the softest of sounds with his microphone and detect the gentlest of touches with his electric appliances. His ancestors could not think of doing any of these things.

But this is not all. Man no longer drives about his flock of cattle nor does he eke out a precarious existence by feeble efforts at cultivation on the fringes of primeval forests. There are a few such people still; they are mere survivals of a past age. Pasturing of cattle in Australia or cultivation of land in America today shows that even on these

primitive occupations modernity and progress have put their inevitable seal. Labour is organised, implements mechanised, and the forces of Nature harnessed. Not in building up alone. In destroying too, he has far surpassed the crude ways of the 'old world. Primitive men no doubt used to fight. They had their bout when they felt they must. But could they ever dream of the wanton warfare of our day? How accomplished, how efficient, how brainy is our modern age!

The same brain that has given the world the big liner, the textile factory, the huge locomotive, not to speak of its baby—the motor car, has also produced the superdreadnought, the tank, the submarine and the bomber. Yet, is man merely a killer? The answer must be in the negative. What of the great religions of the world? What of the beautiful songs that man has sung from the dawn of history? What of the sweet dream that man has dreamt from century to century of love and sacrifice?

This is the perspective from which our rising generation should be able to look at the history of their own motherland. And what a wonderful motherland! Where man, instead of constructing ruthless machines, instead of raising barriers of economic competition, has ever been pulling down the walls to let the human soul breathe whole-

some air! Here man has never tired of failures but has persisted in his efforts at harmony, ever turning the enemy of yesterday into a dear brother of today.

One going on a tour through India will find a most amazing pageant of humanity. A marvellous exhibition of races of men and stages of progress will spread out before his eyes. On the one hand he will meet Pathans and Jats and Rajputs with their huge turbans and swaggering gait, on the other he will come across the semi-wild hillmen, half-clad, poor and lowly, yet not without pride nor without honesty—Bhils and Kols, Santals and Gonds. He will meet the highly westernised Parsee and the Christian of the Konkan and Malabar side by side with the Brahmin of the South—Maratha and Madrasi—who has not discarded one jot of his ancient loyalties. He will meet the polished and poetic denizen of the Doab still dallying with his Persian lyrics and Hindustani *thoomris*. And lower down on the Ganges he will listen to the strains of *kirtan* and *baul*, and find a people burning with an ardent emotionalism, and feeding his fire with but dry straw; yet the visionary counts.

In his itinerary, he will likewise meet famed captains of industry—their steel plants and ship-yards, mills and factories. But he will also pass

by the learned Pundit and the erudite Maulvi, whose dress and ways have changed but little during the past few centuries, whose minds dwell more in things eternal than in things merely temporal. He will meet the descendants of the Vedantins of the South and the Faqirs of Sirhind and Pakpattan, who run away from the rush of things and hold their thoughts in holy hush.

Also there are men who are attempting to bridge the gulf between a life of meditation and a life of bustle. They are keenly alive to the need of combining the old and the new in order to make life truer and fuller. Their names are many. But of the many there are a few that we may remember with pride and inspiration. Tagore and Iqbal, Tata and Mookerjee, Tilak and Tyabji, Ranade and Hydari, are names to conjure with anywhere. They prove that we are not living in the midst of dead bones and withered leaves. They bring home to us the eternal aspiration of man towards a higher life, the never-failing waters of the *ab-i-Hayat*, the spring of life.

The great display of diversity in Indian humanity raises the question of why and wherefore. Why such a wonderfully rich pattern did the Master Weaver weave on the Indian loom? There must always be a reason for things. A splendid assemblage of so many races of men in

one land, what does Providence intend by it, the mind wonders. Is India then the laboratory where the Maker is experimenting to produce by synthesis the man of the future, the man who will be His creature, His image, more than man has ever been before? We can but patiently await the result. But ever by thought and deed we should be in harmony with the scheme of evolution. This is India's destiny, and I urge the younger generation to believe in it. On this subcontinent watered by the seven mighty rivers and crowned by Himalaya's everlasting snows will be born a race of men, who will justify the vision of seers of yore that God made man in His image. This is the aim and goal of evolution—the perfect man in perfect unity with the perfection of his Maker.

To this end Nature endowed India with all her wealth and all her colour to attract people from all lands. To this end it was placed so near the cradle of mankind. So that it was no wonder that from age to age people poured into this country and settled in climates congenial to them. To this end too was the Himalayan wall raised to protect India from the bitter north winds, and the girdle of the ocean provided to make the earth fertile and the clime equable. India thus became a land reserved for the great experiment with humanity.

The country was guarded well enough but not isolated. From the earliest period invaders, traders and immigrants poured in freely. The Indo-Aryan and the Greek, the Scythian and the Hun, the Pathan and the Moghul entered by the north-western passes, while the Nestorian Christians, the Konkan Jews, the Persian Zoroastrians, the Arabs, the Ethiopians and, later, the Europeans came by the sea. Their blood intermingled in this land, and they all added their quota to make up the composite culture thereof. It is a matter of common knowledge that primitive people like the Gond and the Munda, the Kol and the Bhil, even the undeveloped Vedda of Ceylon, were not born in this land, though we have no idea of their earlier homes. We have yet to know these details in order to get a correct perspective. But this much can be said straight off: there is no such thing as an aboriginal native of India. A Bhil is no more a native of India than a Shastri or a Maulvi or an American missionary.

Yet, as science teaches us, all men are descendants of a common ancestor and belong to one single family. The science of life does not stop here. It goes on to assure us that all plants and all living beings, right down to the first living cell that floated on the primeval pools of the earth,

are kinsfolk of man. This is not rhetoric. Science has proved what the poet sings about :

“The same stream of life that runs
through my veins night and day
runs through the world and
dances in rhythmic measures.

* * * *

I feel my limbs are made
glorious by the touch of this world
of life. And my pride is from the
life-throb of ages dancing in
my blood this moment.”¹

If then the paltriest plant or the meanest microbe is my cousin, how can I deny kinship with my own human kind? With what justification can I despoil or enslave or kill other men? All the great religions take their stand firmly on this ultimate truth—the brotherhood of man. Man to man is a brother and not a wolf is the fact that I would ask every young man to keep in mind when he grows up and functions as a citizen. The boundaries that divide nation from nation, community from community, become negligible and harmless if we remember that all men have had a common origin and are moving on inevitably to a common destiny. Brother travellers are we, why wrangle on the way!

¹ *Gitanjali*, 69.

In order to understand human history, it is necessary to evaluate the group sentiments that sway mankind today. How did these sentiments start, what fostered them? The first group was a family of man, his wife or wives and their children. The father was the protector and the guide, and all the rest gave him unquestioning obedience. The family grew into a clan or a tribe, and the paterfamilias into a tribal chieftain. In time, tribes coalesced to form a people, a nation-State, and the chieftain became a king. Thus the group grew wider and wider. Family interests and family sentiments widened into national interests and patriotic sentiments. They acquired a sacrosanct character, so much so that an act which would be a heinous crime when committed by an individual became a sacred duty when committed by a nation. It is obvious that man cannot stop here. Group fetish must make room for a sense of the community of mankind. Otherwise, evolution has no meaning. Sooner or later, man must rise to the full height of human unity.

The ideal of human unity is not a new one. It was enunciated by the seers long ago in the name of God. And it is being increasingly endorsed by men of science since the seventeenth century. But this ideal cannot be achieved until we are able to step out and get over the national

frontiers, until we learn to build a human community in this world, until we reach a point where the right of the individual to live his own life is in accord with the obligation to live for others. Nationhood is no doubt a great landmark in man's ascent towards his evolutionary destiny. But it must not be confused with the goal. He has a long way yet to climb. Why tarry by the roadside!

And in no other country has the track of this ascent been so well marked as in India. Here the great quest of the common soul commenced in right earnest in the hoary past even while the rest of humanity was struggling through the Stone Age, Old and New. The Vedas bear ample testimony to this. The subsequent Hindu culture passed through many ups and downs. Rituals multiplied and reason became fantastic. People were led deeper and deeper into the mazes of cant and convention. Reformers arose. The Buddha laid out a new and simple line of good conduct. The Lord Krishna called upon all to forsake diverse paths and seek shelter with him. Shankara delivered the message of God without a second.

As we follow our cultural history, India was getting ready for the encounter with a simple faith based on the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man. So, when the two faiths of India

and Arabia met, it did not take long to lift the outside cover of the combat. Soon the mystics and saints of Hinduism and Islam recognised one another and filled the whole land with moving songs of love and faith. Already Arabia had come into contact with Persia, already the pure white of Islam had taken a tinge of pink. In India this trend received another impetus till was evolved what might be called, in the words of the first Great Moghul, "The Hindustani Way", as the Hindus and Musalmans began to don a common cultural garb.

In the light of this progressive synthesis let it be clearly visualised, that India has a definite mission in this world. She has a much-needed message to deliver to a distracted humanity. This mission she cannot perform, this message she cannot deliver, unless she has faith in herself, her glorious past, and her still more glorious future. Let the Indian take as much as he needs from others, but let him give as well as take, having due regard for his historic tradition. It is in the matter of this give and take that we have so much to learn from, so much to look in, the Indian States.

Hyderabad is changing in her outward aspect daily, adopting so many things freely from the West, but without abating an iota of her basic

is unique. Travancore is fast modernising—in colleges and factories, roads and communications, but the basic fact remains that the State belongs to the Deity Padmanabha and that the Maharaja is His humble servant. And think of this—who leads the Tazia processions in Gwalior, and who looks after the Sanchi Stupa in Bhopal? It is the Rulers of these States. And all that is colourful in Indian life seems to have been concentrated and conserved in the States. The Provinces of British India look progressive and opulent, but they hardly seem Indian, except in special centres like Benares and Aligarh. Then there is the question of historic association. The capital of a State is alive with the spirit of the past. Nor is creative statesmanship confined to British India. We owe a good deal to the great departed Ministers of States. There are notable builders still living, the achievements of many of whom are not in the least due to the sympathy and responsiveness of the Rulers themselves.

It is no use charging the States with being unprogressive and undemocratic. After all the democracy that one sees at work elsewhere is but play-acting. Mass democracy is not the order of the day. Precious little power lies anywhere in the hands of the Demos, the people at large. A far sweeter ideal is king and people joining hands

in love and understanding in the service of God, who is the absolute owner of every State, the absolute Master of every people. After the present devastating war is over modern man will have to shed many of his cherished illusions. It is not unlikely that India, the India of Asoka and Akbar, the India of Kabir and Nanak, will obtain a hearing. Let the Indian revive and prepare himself for his task.

A terrible war is now on out of which Europe hopes to emerge into a hearty human federation, into an all-embracing World State. The measures that Europe has so far adopted are such as leave it to war to build a world beyond war. For she can forge no better links than the cold and mechanical ones of political and economic interests. While it seems indeed very realistic, the approach on these lines but leads to ever more adroit exploitation of the very interests that are sought to be mutually adjusted. So then 1914 is repeated on a wider and more horrible scale in 1939. The time is come when life has to be thoroughly reconstructed on the faith: "He who does not love does not know God, for God is love."¹ When intellect is cultivated in its proper proportion and heart is given its share in shaping the future of mankind, a true human commonwealth cannot be

¹ *Gospel*, iv.

far behind. International diplomacy is but a blunt implement to fit together all national concerns. Diplomats will do better by listening to the warning: "Put thy cleverness away, love is something other than this, and he who has sought it has found it."¹

Two things, however, are significant. Firstly, Britain holds in trust the moral leadership in the present war; secondly, she has had intimate contact with India. England representing modern political and economic achievements at their best, and India the old world values of the spirit and culture—a united effort of both is all that should justify their being locked together. The hand of Providence has so placed them that the Western technique of coalescing men by means of political and economic mechanism may be supplemented by the Eastern way of entering into an inward integration based on human relationship. England with her sciences and India with her traditions have jointly to solve the problem of mankind, jointly by the gifts of head and heart. This is the *raison d'être* why India has lived through centuries to meet England. There is a logic in whatever happens. The Muslim, and later on the British, could not have met the Hindu in India against the forces of this logic. The British

¹ Kabir.

advent finally lays out the background of the evolutionary scheme of uniting East and West. At this point India has finished her preliminary course. And now the whole process requires the British nation and the growing Indian nation to meet and merge in a super-national urge to reconstruct human unity on a wider world.

Unity of India is a fact of our history and heritage. Yet we seem unable to see it, to think of it. We have even developed a tragic earnestness to disown it. But it may only be temporarily foiled by our unwisdom. It cannot be frustrated for good. After all we cannot thwart the scheme of Nature, her Law of Evolution.

Unity of India is inevitable no less than the unity of the world. It is bound to come not merely out of a political necessity but of an evolutionary urge. Man's evolution, starting from his elemental oneness, proceeds, through apparently increasing diversities, to a richer unity. Today he is on a great turning-point. Nobody can prophesy what the future world will be like. But this is clear that this war is a revolution. The outlines of the future reconstruction cannot now be seen with any clear precision. It is hoped that India will fit admirably into this future world, and her different communities will behave as evolutionary factors of her own progressive unity.

INDIA IN THE LIGHT OF HUMAN HISTORY

BEFORE we start on the history proper of India, I think, it is but right that we should have some conception of life on this planet and a correct perspective of human history as a whole. Let us see how, bit by bit, the stage was set for man.

The curtain rises on a vast open space dotted with myriads of heavenly bodies, big and small. One corner of this firmament is lit up by the resplendent sun, a mass of white-hot vapour in a state of violent agitation and movement, the solar system being then but one whole.

The heavens seen through a telescope show here and there clouds of vapour, spiral in shape and luminous to look at. They are called 'nebulæ'. They do not stand still as they seem to. Indeed, they move with tremendous speed. It is believed that in the incalculable past such a flying spiral of elemental gases was overwhelmed by its own motion. In that terrific whirlpool it began to throw out parts, which, again, started rotating in the vault of heaven. These parts, as they separated, formed our world, which was born

chiselled the earliest hills into new features. Rain had not long to do it single-handed. Streams of ice joined in this task. In the wake of this vast water-flow appeared lakes and rivers and seas. Also did it wash away particles of rocks to the seas. These were the silts that the seas went on depositing and widening till at long last land began to spread out on the lap of the sea. It was now about 2000 million years ago, only when the climate became somewhat bearable and the sun could break through the passage cleared by the melting clouds, that life made its first appearance on these primal waters formed into shallow seas.

I should like here to condense the long long story of life in its progress from this stage to the appearance of the Primates, who happen to be in line with man, in these picturesque words :

“The first living being was a single-celled organism, neither animal nor plant, microscopic in size and entirely simple in construction. The one-celled representative of animal life made its appearance very soon after, equally small in size and equally simple in its build. But the evolution of Nature did not stop here. Life grew richer, more and more complex, every day. From the one-celled to the many-celled, from the spineless to the spined, from the mail-clad fish and their foes, the dread sea scorpions, denizens of the deep, to the amphibia who

both swam in the water and crawled on the virgin soil, just appearing ; from the froglike amphibia to the gigantic reptile, from the egg-laying reptile to the mammal who nursed its young, the impressive pageantry of animal life marched on and on. Each new species was an improvement on the old, each cataclysm of Nature evolved a type to meet it. At last there appeared the branch known as the Primate.’’¹

By this time Nature had laid out a beautiful background for a better life to be lived. A pleasant scenic change came over the earth. Gone was now the bleak winter and with it the race of the monstrous reptiles. The growth of the little green grass was a big event. In the words of Rabindranath : “The grass blade is worthy of the great world where it grows The great earth makes herself hospitable with the help of the grass.”² It prepared the pasture ground. Also the forests with twigs and tendrils and fruits had shot up in readiness to provide a spacious home and dainty food to tree mammals as well as ground mammals, who roamed freely and widely with offsprings about them. To welcome these remote ancestors of men the earth smiled in flowers, with greetings of beauty and odour. And presently

¹ Address by the Hon’ble Sir Sultan Ahmed at the All Religions Conference held at Delhi in March, 1942.

² *Stray Birds*.

swarmed in the bees, playing their wings in tune with the music of welcome.

In the animal world, the progress was mainly concentrated on the growth of the brain. Correspondingly, habits improved. Family life among anthropoid apes provided companionship, which led to love and understanding. A kind of communication by signs and yells developed. Living together, the young ones had occasion to learn from parents. Here was the crudest beginning of handing down knowledge and experience from generation to generation. So tradition had its root in the social life of the anthropoids. And tradition is the parent of progress. By transmitting experience, tradition serves as the carrier of knowledge.

With the growth of brain, body underwent a process of reorganisation and readjustment. Fore-legs were gradually changed into hands, while hind legs became more and more suited to erect walking as also quick wandering. Neck was reformed to give the eyes a better range of vision to which brain added power of observation. Hand was now free to cultivate skill in making flint implements to fight enemies, even in drawing pictures. Jaw-bones were reconstructed to put words into the mouth in place of mere yells. Apemen used to make strange grunts to warn

their young ones of approaching danger, who in turn grunted back. These throaty noises developed into talking very late. And then, it was the work of brain to teach that words stood for ideas, and, later on, to show that ideas conformed to things. A man had no longer to go near an object to indicate his desire but could well say from where he was that he wanted it.

The mammals brought with them that human touch between parent and offspring. This is the most pronounced change in outlook in contrast with the way of destruction practised by giant reptiles, who were so astoundingly free from the love of the kind. This new outlook of love as the sovereign factor of life, introduced by birds and improved upon by apes, was left to man to be carried on to the supreme conception of universal love. Said the Son of God in the *Gospel*: "As the Father has loved Me, and so I have loved you. As I have loved you, you are to love one another. I have told you this that My joy may be with you and your joy complete."

The original primate was a tree-dweller of marked agility, with alert senses, and his organs of respiration, circulation and digestion fully developed. The development of brain was well experimented upon the earlier members of the primates. Evolution proceeded by degrees from

half-ape and Lemur through tree-ape and ground-ape to man-like ape of the type of Gorilla and Chimpanzee (Anthropoid) and the walking ape-man of Java (*Pithecanthropus*) and of China (*Sinanthropus*) and the dawn-man of Piltown in Sussex (*Eoanthropus*). All these are no direct ancestors of man but only more or less related forms, and the last of them may be said to have existed between a hundred and a hundred and fifty thousand years ago.

These primitive men lived out in the open in temporarily erected shelters and are known to pre-history as River-drift men. Long after them appeared the Cave-men: first, the short statured and mis-shapen half-men, whose remains have been found in the caves at Neanderthal; and second, the tall and handsome True men, looking very much as we do, in scientific terms—*Homo Sapiens*, and in plain words—rational men, whose relics have been collected from the caves at Cromagnon and other places in France and Spain. It is at this point that we come to the direct ancestors of modern men.

The Neanderthals, who lived about 50 or 60 thousand years ago, and disappeared without leaving any descendants behind them, had come to Europe before the third glacial period had set in, and dwelt mostly in caves through that in-

tensely cold age. Their brain was quite large but wanting in the rich finish of the frontal region that was given to the *Homo Sapiens*, who made their appearance about 40 or 30 thousand years ago when the ice sheets were finally retreating and summer at least had become a pleasant season all over Europe except the extreme north.

Since the day of *Homo Sapiens* the human body has undergone practically no transformation. The cerebral structure was all that had to change. Henceforward evolution has been almost entirely inward, in respect of man's brain capacities, social ties and cultural achievements. These *Cromagnon* Cave-men improved upon the mode of life of their predecessors. They were, however, born artists. Their implements carved on bone and ivory, their pictures painted on the walls of their caves, the human and animal figures modelled by them were unequalled by their successors for a very long time. That they believed in magic and wizardry, that they had begun to speculate boldly on life after death is clear from the painting and sculpture that they have left behind them. Their predecessors, the *Neanderthals*, it may be mentioned, had already probably laid the foundation of religious belief by way of observing a certain amount of ritual in the burial of their dead.

The cradle of mankind was the Mediterranean

valley, which is now under what is the Mediterranean sea, wherefrom the ancestors of the modern man, *Homo Sapiens*, migrated into the region of Cromagnon. They entered by two routes. One lot came from the south *via* the north African coast and Spain and the other from the east *via* south Russia, Moravia.

Sometime about half the length of time between their and our own days the old land bridges had been eaten through by ocean waters, giving the present outline to the Mediterranean sea, though Britain, Scandinavia, Denmark and Germany continued to be one unbroken land mass for some thousand years yet. Another point to remember is that during the glacial periods several tracts in Asia got ice-bound and the people confined therein developed a good many distinctive traits. However, by this time mankind was divided into its main racial orders or ethnic groups : The ancestors of the Berbers, Egyptians, Dravidians, Semites, Indonesians, Polynesians etc. inhabited the *Mediterranean* world. The *Nordic* ancestors of Scandinavians, Germans, Persians, Afghans, Aryan Indians etc., lived in central and northern Europe. On the lower Danube, Caspian coast and throughout northern Asia were the *Mongolian* ancestors of the Chinese, Siamese, Burmese, Korean (Japanese), Turks.

Malayans etc. In the western Alps, British isles, Italy, Asia Minor were the *Alpine* ancestors of Swiss, Poles, Russians, Armenians, Gujratis, Bengalees, etc. The ancestors of the *Negroid* races lived in South Africa, the Indian Archipelago, Philippine Islands, while those of the pre-Dravidian or *Australian* races lived in the Deccan, Malaya Peninsula and Australia.

The Nordics entered very late the arena of civilised humanity. It was during what is called the New Stone or Neolithic Age that the tall and fair-haired hunters of the north developed a culture of their own. They tamed dogs and hunted stags, built boats and went about fishing over the waters of the newly formed gulfs and seas. Their harpoons as well as their knives and axes, and fish-spears beautifully made, have been discovered in large numbers testifying to the growth of their intelligence and skill. Yet the honour of making the first formidable human civilisation does not belong to them. The ancient civilisations of Egypt, Sumeria, Assyria, Babylonia and the Indus Valley were built by people other than Nordics. Likewise the culture of Greece and Rome was the contribution of the Mediterraneans and of the southern tribes only of the Indo-Aryan group. From the harbours of Phœnicia went the culture waves that gave the first impetus to the

civilisation of Europe, while the oriental forces of Christianity had a tangible sway over the Roman Empire at Constantinople. It is necessary, however, to remember that though the cultural ages (Old Stone, New Stone, Bronze, Iron, and so on) followed one another in a fixed succession for any particular people, the progress of evolution was not simultaneous all over the world. For instance, when Egypt and Assyria had already evolved an advanced type of civilisation, Central and South Europe were just leaving the Stone Age behind, while the northern hunters were practically barbarians. Similarly, when in the 19th century Europe had evolved her mechanical and industrial civilisation the primitive Tasmanian was still in the Old Stone Age.

It was only when man has lived through ninety-nine-hundredths of the long period of his existence of about a million years, and it was in Asia, again, that the fundamentals of human civilisation were set in a conspicuous form. Some ten or eight thousand years ago, the Lower Nile Valley laid the foundation of this civilisation, and the Doab of the Euphrates and the Tigris, the island of Crete, the Valley of the Yellow River and the Indus Valley readily followed up the line, each making its own peculiar contribution. With these River Valley civilisations humanity passed

definitely out of the period of pre-history into that of Archæology. Here we find man as a conscious being shaping his destiny and in possession of great power over material world. Not only did he now domesticate wild animals but wild cereal grasses too were brought under a process of agricultural food supply. He was also mastering the art of writing, the craft of weaving textile fabrics, making glazed pottery, forging metal weapons, running wheeled vehicles, even fitting out sea-going vessels. Here was the first great architecture, the first great society of several million souls, and the first great State with regular governmental organisation.

Broadly speaking, humanity now set up two types of civilisation—agricultural and pastoral. The initial gift of the former to the growth of civilisation was indeed very large. On the other hand, given to hunting and riding across mountains, the nomads were a much harder lot than the cultivators who took to a settled life on the valleys of the great rivers where the land was bountiful. Even in sea-faring which was common to some extent, there was a good deal of difference between the quiet commercial voyages of the Mediterraneans and the robust adventures of the North Sea men. On the whole, the two types were but the two rival outlooks of life—cult of the food

no manner of means can be thought of as any continuation of the Indus Valley period. All the legacy that can only be guessed is that the Shiva-Sakti cult and also the *yoga* practice appear to be known to the Aryāns. The process of synthesis at work between the Aryans and Dravidians can, however, be studied from ancient Indian literatures.

The synthetic outlook of the Indo-Aryan was expressed not only in religious and social but also in political activities. He came in contact with the pre-Āryan engaged in the worship of phallus, the symbol of generation, and had little difficulty in working out an amalgamation of the primitive deity with the Vedic Rudra, the god of destruction. In politics we find that Rama after his victory in the South straightaway put up Sugriva and Bibhisana on the throne of their people. The Aryan was not worried about annexing kingdom but forming alliances. It is also clear that Aryan polity acknowledged effective checks on the power of a king. No less a ruler than the godly Rama himself gracefully acknowledged social and political checks that resided in the will of the people, exemplified by the slaying of Sudraka and exile of Sita.

All this is not history in the modern sense but it shows what the tradition was in the ancient

times when the epics were written. Matters of ancient history in India have not had the full aid of archaeology. But these matters cannot simply be given up or ignored on that account. Rather the intuition and experience of veteran historians are much in need in order to extract possible facts out of accepted traditions. It is the ripe wisdom and observation of the senior physician that are all the more necessary for a dependable diagnosis where the aid of clinics is not available. The test of resourcefulness lies in the capacity to act under limitations.

It may, however, be mentioned by the way that our view of the synthetic history suggested above receives powerful support from the fact that in the Kanarese country today there is a sect¹ called the *Lingāyet* or *Veera Shaiva*, who worship

¹ This was found in the twelfth century by Basava, a Brahmin who rose to great power in the court of Bijjala in Kalyan. Sick of the empty formalism of the religion of his days, he founded a cult based on simple devotion to the God Shiva. He preached against the existing priestly class, holding that no intermediaries were needed between man and God. All men, he said, were equal in the eyes of God, and women had the same spiritual capacities as men had.

It does not look he founded any new religion. Rather his achievement seems to consist in discarding the excessive formalism of contemporary religion, and in thinking of God in terms of Shiva. To treat him as another reformer like Sri Chaitanya would be more appropriate.

There are proofs as to the existence of Shaivism in south India as far back as 3000 B.C. but very little is definitely known of the life and culture of the early peoples before the Christian era. In fact, our knowledge is not full till we come to the seventh century, A.D.

Shiva as the phallic emblem and hold the bull in veneration. These people do not acknowledge the authority of the Vedas and have nothing to do with Brahmans. They have their own priests called *Jangamas*. It seems fairly obvious that they are the representatives of a pre-Aryan culture. Another interesting fact is that the Brahui tribe living in the Dadu hills to the west of the Indus speak a dialect which cannot be characterised as Aryan and which in many ways bears resemblance to the old Tamil of the South. There is a Tamilian tradition that in the days before recorded history its people sent colonisers to the land around Iraq and Syria. If, therefore, we posit an all-India Dravidian civilisation having culturally a Sumerian affinity or identity we cannot go far wrong.

How long the Indus Valley culture endured; when and how it ended, we do not know today. The old literature of India gives ample clue to the link between the older Dravidian kings and the immigrant Aryans down the South, but there is no mention of any struggle for mastery in the Indus Valley. Now that Mohenjodaro and Harappa have been opened up, we know a great deal about the great advance the Indus men had made in architecture and the arts of life. But it is strange that no building nor any statuary of the

period between that of the Indus Valley civilisation and the rise of Buddhism has yet been found. There might be sepulchred structures of the Dolmen or Menhir type in the South, which belonged to this period, but they can hardly be characterised as a continuation of the high culture of the Indus' Valley architecture.

The Aryans who came into India did not worship idols or symbols. They had their Vedic gods but they never made images of them. Their ritual *par excellence* was the sacrificial fire and their principal hymn is the one to the Sun god, known as the *Sāvitrī* or *Gāyatrī*. This would seem to indicate that they had but recently parted from their brethren of Persia, who were purely the Sun and Fire worshippers. The Indo-Aryans, faithful to their new mode of life, the agricultural, formally gave Indra, the god of rain, the first place in their pantheon, while retaining their traditional devotion to Fire, the element so necessary to the nomad.

Agriculture was really the groundwork of Vedic civilisation. Indra was particularly invoked for his gracious presence on the occasions of prayers "to press the furrow down", so that the land might yield a rich produce. At the time of the Vedas, when there were no stereotyped caste orders, every master of the household had his

routine considerably occupied by agricultural occupations. He went to the field to look after the land and its cultivation and supervised the works of the ploughmen, if he happened to employ any. He prayed fervently to Indra and Pushan, while he also appealed to the evil powers not to visit his farm. No doubt, he prayed to heavens for timely rains; at the same time, he did not neglect to cut channels to fertilise the soil. At last the crop would be ripe. He would then call his men to gather the harvest; but he would never forget to leave on the field some sheaves as a token of thankfulness and payment of fees to the kind-hearted goblins who did not injure his crop. Cows and bullocks received his love and care, and he intently watched their return home every evening after their daily toil or grazing.

Elaborate ceremonies, poetic in their nature, attend the course of agriculture of those days. Ploughing is started on a select day, under the influence of an auspicious star like Rohini. The field and the heaven get oblation and reverence. Green and fried grains and curd and perfume are offered also to Indra and other deities. Bullocks are given *ghee* and honey for drink. Then the plough begins to be driven, while, touching it, a Brahman recites a verse and washes the head of the bullock with purified water. With suitable

variations, nearly similar observances are followed in paying homage to the furrow, the threshing-floor, as also the sowing, reaping, and storing operations. The first partaking of the new crop is accompanied with merry rituals. Women of the family generally take part in all these functions. Of course, it goes without saying, Brahmanas are sumptuously fed for the extraction of their coveted benedictions.

Agricultural psalms are many and wonderful. The prayer to the presiding deity of the field gives us a glimpse of the charming innocence of the people and the delicate serenity of their mind. The prayer at one place says: "Sweet be the plants for us, the heavens, the waters, and full of sweet for us be air's mid region. May the Field's Lord for us be full of sweetness and may we follow after him uninjured." The sense of their living in plentitude and in the fulness of their heart is vividly carried to us through the healthy animation of the prayer on sowing seeds: "When we invoke thee, god grain, and thou dost listen, then do thou raise thyself up like the sky, be inexhaustible as the sea. Inexhaustible shall be those that attend to thee, inexhaustible thy heaps!"

Rabindranath believes that the epic of the Ramayana is but a long allegory, having behind it the cult of cultivation carried down to the South

where people used to prey on human beings for meal. The story of the resurrection of Ahalya, the poet holds, indicates the Aryan attempt at bringing the stony regions of Central India under the power of the plough. The Mahabharata too shows the importance of agricultural affairs. The sage Narada asks Yudhishthira, if agriculture, cattle-rearing and rural credits are operating properly and if the officer¹ for the protection of cultivators is minding his duties carefully and conscientiously. In the same way, the *Arthasāstra* of Kautilya enjoins that kings must keep a keen watch on agricultural conditions of the country, transport of products and marketing facilities. The fund of vitality and good humour,

¹ It may not be out of place here to compare a *firman* of the Emperor Aurangzeb on the duty of the agricultural revenue officer. It says: "If (God forbid) any calamity from the earth or sky overtakes a *mahal*, strongly urge the *amins* and *amils* to watch the standing crops with great care and fidelity, and after enquiring into the sown fields they should carefully ascertain (the loss) according to the comparative state of the present and past produced (*hast-o-bud*). You should never admit as valid any *sarbasta* calamity, the discrimination (*tafriq*) of which depends solely on the reports of the *chaudhurs*, *qanungoes*, *muqaddams* and *patwaris*. So that all the ryots may attain to their rights and may be saved from misfortune and loss and usurpers may not usurp (other's rights). Strongly urge the *amins*, *amils*, *chaudhurs*, *qanungoes* and *mutasaddis*, to abolish *balia* (or *halia*) exactions (*akhrājat*) in excess of revenue and forbidden *abwabs* (cesses), which impair the welfare of the ryots. Take securities from them that they should never exact *balia* or collect *abwabs* prohibited and abolished by His Majesty. And you yourself should constantly get information, and if you find any one doing so and not heeding your prohibition and threat, report the fact to the Emperor, that he may be dismissed from service and another appointed to his place."

growing out of a good living, seeks outlet in public activities and social services. Kautilya lays down the rule: "Those who, with their united efforts, construct roads, buildings and bridges beneficial to the whole country and do not only adorn their villages but also keep watch on them shall be shown favourable concessions by the king."

Well, the Aryans entered the Punjab in several groups with their primitive tribal organisation, gradually spread on the Gangetic valley and formed powerful kingdoms. For quite a long time these were many in number and gave ample scope for self-government. At times, however, a mighty ruler became a nominal overlord—*Rājachakravartī*. But empire in the proper sense grew up very late as a reaction to repeated foreign invasions. It is after the great Alexander's invasion that India gave birth to a real empire under the Mauryas. Along with it, statecraft took a scientific turn, and works under the authorship of Sukra and Kautilya saw the light of day. Sukra's *Dandanīti* speaks of a minister with a full-fledged portfolio of explosives! These teachers of polity went along the lines of thorough imperialism.

Yet India was not without her republican States. Three of these, *Vaishali*, *Mallabharata* and *Yaudheya* are to be mentioned. *Pandya*

they were creations of Mongolian tribes. But it matters little. These Mongols were as much Indians as any Aryans or Dravidians. More than a thousand years later, Dravidian genius developed a wonderfully advanced constitution in the South. We learn the details thereof from the inscriptions of Parantaka, the Chola emperor. Therein a series of checks are provided to the autocratic power of the ruler. Theocratic limitation to royal absolutism was the usual thing in ancient Indian kingdoms. But the Chola Mahamandala developed checks of a definitely constitutional and modern type.

In the fourth century B.C. came to India the conquering hero of Macedon. He won victories at first, but ultimately thought it wise to retire. Selucus Nicator remained behind as ruler of Bactria. He entered into an alliance with the first Maurya emperor, and it is said that the latter married a western princess to cement the alliance. It is more than probable that there were many such inter-racial marriages amongst humbler folk and that several Greeks settled in the northern Indian kingdoms. How the Greek king Menander had Buddhism expounded to him is recorded in the famous Pali book *Questions of King Menander*. Greek sculptors freely made images of the Buddha, and their Indian disciples mastered the

technique of Greek sculpture to a remarkable degree. The Hindu savants made a study of Greek sculpture and also, as far as astronomy goes, left a record of it in a book called "Romaka Siddhanta". That they also studied the Greek drama is clear from the fact that the drop curtain got the name *yavanikā* or Greek curtain. Thus did these ancient foreigners make their contribution to the growth of culture in this country.

The early 'Aryan fought and defeated the pre-Dravidian and the Dravidian all over the country and ultimately extended their conquests right down to Cape Comorin. The earlier people accepted their religion and mode of life, while they incorporated into their civilisation all that they thought worth preserving of the older cultures. Thus went on life in India for centuries till fresh victors arrived from the north-west. These were the Scythians, the Huns and the Getae from Central Asia. They entered India as invaders and enemies but stayed on to become friends and brothers. The ancient Getae are today the sturdy peasant soldiers of northern India, who proudly call themselves the Jats. Such surnames as Saksena and Hoon in the north indicate the final absorption of Scythians and Huns into the Aryan family. But already before this the Buddha had carried and preached his message of peace. Of

the emperors whose names are connected intimately with the spread of Buddhism, one Asoka was an Aryan, the other, Kanishka of Taxila, was a full-blooded Scythian. The contribution of the Bactrian Greeks, like that of the Huns and Getae, to this progressive synthesis of Indian life is a matter of recorded history. In the same way, the Muslims in India contributed to the historic process of evolution. But unfortunately, under the influence of present day politics, the history of Islamic rule in India has been generally viewed from a perspective that takes little or no account of the historic movements of evolution. This has been not merely an academic failure. Such history has been the ready help-maid of retrogressive purposes, socially as well as politically.

There is a theory, it may be appositely recalled here, that somewhere on the shores of the Baltic round about Lithuania evolved the people, who speak the group of languages known as the Aryan. For it should be remembered that the word Aryan carries with it no significance whatever as to blood or race but means merely people talking one of this group of languages. However, these so-called Aryans, supposed to include the present day peoples of Europe, the old Persians and the Indo-Aryans, have been given a very important position in the evolution of human

culture. This has led to certain misconceptions and has even created a good deal of mischief. We hear much these days of the preposterous claims put forth by the race known as the Nordic, or the so-called Aryans, or the people called Teutons, to rule the whole world. One hopes that after the present war is over the myth about race will be exploded. But our fear is that such ideas may linger in India and do incalculable harm here. Let us be explicit. The culture or history of India has been built up not by the so-called Aryan alone, but conjointly by the pre-Dravidian, the Dravidian as well as the Aryan speaking immigrants, the Scythian invaders, the Afghans, the Moghuls and a host of others. That each made his contribution to India's growth is a matter of history. How can any one of these turn round today and claim to be the custodian of India's culture!

Early in the Christian era a body of Christian colonists came and settled in the extreme south. The fact that they were welcome shows the extraordinarily assimilative quality of the culture that was being built up here. The Hindu gave a patient hearing to the ideals of the newcomer. In the course of time an *Īsā Pûrānam* was written in the best style of the Hindu Puranas, just as afterwards an *Āllāh Upaniṣhad*

had been written in the furtherance of the same spirit. Similarly, when the rising tide of Islam in Arabia submerged Persia, a body of Persian refugees, under a leader Ardeshir by name, came by the sea with their Sacred Fire and landed on the Surat coast. The King of the country received them cordially and allowed them to put up their first temple, *Ātash Behrām*, at a place called Udwarā in his kingdom. The descendants of these immigrants form the important community of Parsees in western India, who have in so many ways enriched the life of their adopted country.

The nature of the first contacts between India and Islamic countries was equally friendly and cultural. The Muslim came to the Western coast as a trader and settled there and in the South much prior to Muhammad bin Kasim's invasion of Sind. Between India and the refined court of Baghdad there were excellent relations for a good long time. Of the many instances of good understanding the one, *viz.*, the visit to Baghdad of a pundit called Vidyapati alias Vidpai, may deserve particular mention.¹

¹ Guru Nanak's homage to the Black Stone of Kaaba more than suggests that the Hindu *saṁnyasin's* traditional round of pilgrimage (*tirtha parikrama*) at one remote time included a visit to Mecca, when Arabia and India had formed parts of the same culture zone. No less striking is the fact that Alberuni while in India became 'a keen and critical student of the Hindu

Kasim's invasion was entirely Kasim's business. The Caliph might have given his assent to it, believing in the story that the Sind authorities had maltreated some Arab sailors. The polished Baghḍad court of the day was better known for its urbanity and broad outlook than for swashbuckling or narrow fanaticism. The Sind State was being torn asunder by internal dissensions. A Brahman usurper, unpopular in the extreme, was ruling over a Buddhist people. Kasim knew it would be easy work to conquer such a country and thereby gain the Caliph's favour. Sind was conquered with the assent of its Buddhist population, but for one reason or another Kasim did not live to enjoy the fruits of his victory. Tradition has it that soon after his Sind expedition Kasim was put to death with ignominy under the orders of the Caliph himself, who did not care to retain or consolidate his Indian kingdom. The Arab occupation of Sind continued in a desultory fashion till a few decades later some Rajput tribes from the adjoining Jessalmere tract reconquered the territory. The Caliph did not even think of putting up any resistance worth the name.

Also Mahmud's plundering expeditions were

Sastras, with the result that he could appeal in a most reasoned and persuasive strain for an open-hearted mutual understanding.

without a design to carve out a kingdom in India. They were entirely ephemeral in character. That he was after loot and loot alone is today an admitted fact. It paid him to pose as an Islamic champion and he did it. His real mentality is evident from the fact that he employed Hindu commanders in his wars against his Islamic neighbours in Central Asia.

The real conquest of any part of India by a Muslim ruler had to wait till the fag end of the twelfth century. There was no *jihad* aspect in the conquest of Muhammad Ghor, for it was with the alliance of the Hindu Raja of Canouj that the conquest was made. The alliance was absolutely political, the conquest was political too.

Islam in India entered on a new phase when Kutbuddin Aibek made Delhi the seat of an empire independent of any Afghan control. Hereafter the whole story of Moghul rule in India was Indian in its political conception. The political separation of the Indian Sultanate from the trans-Himalayan Muslim world has a very great deal to do with the proper understanding of the Muslim history of India. This alienation was so definite that the men of his ancient homeland and his own religion started viewing the Indian Muslim with a feeling of estrangement. Already as early as the end of the fourteenth

century Timur could offer this plea for invading India, that the Muslim here "had strayed from the Mahomedan fold." By the time of the Moghul conquest this process of straying away attained the positive composition of a joint Hindu-Muslim way of life, almost a common national existence. Abul Fazl, in admiring the beauties of Hindustan, only voiced the general feeling of "the love of my native country." Jehangir's deep veneration for Jadrup Gosain and Dara Suko's compilation of the *Majma-ul-Bahrain* reveal a most intimate spiritual fellowship between Hindus and Muslims. In fact, the dominant spirit of medieval India has been finely expressed by Kabir in his beautiful belief that he was "at once the child of Allah and Ram".

No wonder that often did the Indian Muslims and Hindus get together to resist the aggression of a foreign Muslim power. Afghan and Moghul, Abyssinian and Mulki, all Muslims in India had no want of attachment for India as their own homeland. And the Hindu took many things from his Muslim brother by way of neighbourly exchange of cultural and social commodities. History has recorded how seekers and preachers of truth met their cruel fate at the hands of the early Christian Fathers in Europe. Bruno was burnt at the stake and Spinoza died under the

Inquisition. Yet no one underrates the humanising gifts of Christianity to which mankind owe an unpayable debt. No less appreciable were the kindly influences that Islam released for the progress of humanity.

Factions arose frequently as an immediate reaction of the meeting with strangers and their cultures. But factions went down as time went on, and angularities were brushed away as contacts grew more and more intimate. Feeling for neighbourly love became truer day by day, and unity emerged conspicuously on the background of fading factions. As it has been so beautifully put :

“Where the Faquirs of Sirhind and Pakpattan mingled their messages with those of the Sannyasins of Benares and Pryag, we need but mutely think on this truth and better not argue. Where Kabir and Nanak, Rajjab and Ravidas, Paltoo and Prannath, Baba Lal and Dadu Dayal, sang of “both Allah the Bountiful and Ram”, we have only to lift our heart to the Most High, to the One God, who equally inspired the Upanishad and the Quran. Where Amir Khasru and Gopal Nayak played together in the realm of music, and Abul Fazl and Raja Todarmull worked for the cohesion of an empire, the talk of co-operation is indeed superfluous. Yet, such is our cruel irony that this very hallowed land—where the pre-Aryan and the Aryan, the Buddhist and the

Zoroastrian, the Sufi and the Bhagat, the Vedant and the Quran, Sanskrit and Persian, the East and the West, put forth melodies in a grand orchestra—should be torn with the war of creeds. Ours is *par excellence* the land of unity—of peoples and religions and cultures. And yet it is our own country that is to-day subject to the bitterest deprivation for want of an agreement. We are perhaps the worst fantastic of 'prodigal sons'.¹

HUMAN UNITY

UNITY is indicated in evolution. It is implanted in the nature of man. From one end of the world to the other, and during the last forty thousand years, since the day he appeared on the stage, man stands for countless beings of one singular kind. He goes on endlessly altering and multiplying types, but all within the limits of a single species—known to science as *Homo Sapiens*. This, as Huxley observes, is indeed a great wonder. No other animals have such amazing diversities in unity. There are differences, and they are vast. They differ in speech, in colour, in power, from country to country,

¹ Address by Sir Sultan Ahmed at the All Religions Conference, Delhi, 1942.

from nation to nation, from age to age, and even from individual to individual. Race, religion and culture cut across one another. They vary immensely. Immensely, but not fundamentally. Under the skin man is one.

A little observation should reveal at once a remarkable unity in the career of man :

“The recognition of the Orient as lying behind the history of Europe, just as the history of Europe lies behind that of America, and the further possibility of pushing back behind the historic Orient to the ages of man’s pre-historic development and linking these up in their turn with the history of Orient, thus giving us the ever remoter stages, America, Europe, and the Near Orient, pre-historic man, the geological ages—these latter reconstructions of the new historian disclose to us the career of man for the first time as one whole, to be regarded as a consecutive development from the stone fist hatchet to the shell fragments of 1914 buried side by side on the battle fields of Somme. A comprehensive study of the ancient Orient, carried on with open eyes and with larger objects in view than the statistics of the dative case, reveals to us the well-known and long familiar historic epochs of the career of European man for the first time set in a background of several hundred thousand years.”¹

Man’s problems have to be solved in the light of

¹ J. H. Breasted, *The New Past*.

such a synthetic view of his ascent to higher life, wider affiliations.

In fact, thinkers everywhere today visualise one kingdom for all men. Life is profoundly full of anomalies. Through all our frantic animosities we may yet be tremendously striving in an unconscious endeavour for a supreme cohesion. Our blind rivalry is but an awkward expression of our very approach to unity. It is true not only in man's cultural achievements but also in his total political progress. As it has been aptly said :

“Even the Great War, which in one aspect seemed to afford so horrible an illustration of the disruptive, destructive, disuniting tendencies of Man, was itself, in another aspect, a very striking proof of this movement towards unity. For it was the first event in human history in which every people on the face of the globe was demonstrably, and for the most part consciously, concerned. It was a terrific proof of the fact that the whole round globe has become, in some sense, an economic unit and a single political system. A shot is fired in the uplands of the secluded and little-known province of Bosnia : and behold ! all the peoples of the earth, the islanders of the Pacific, the negroes of Central Africa, the farmers of New Zealand, the tribes of the Himalayas, find themselves drawn into the vortex of a titanic conflict, and know that their fate depends upon its issue. Never before, in all human history, has there been such a clango-

rous demonstration of the inter-dependence of all the races of men."¹

This need not, however, be taken as the whole truth. There is the other side of it, with which this statement has to be supplemented :

"War often temporarily unites, but it also divides. Permanent unity depends on permanent common interests, and if these do not already exist war cannot create them. Besides, we have reached a stage where civilization demands, not the unity of a nation simply, but unity between nations. War prevents this—even the Allies of the Great War are not brought closer together in consequence, but on the contrary have tended to fall further apart than before it."²

It is, however, not entirely the pressure of modern affairs out of which the world-wide kinship of man may be said to have originated. This kinship is in the very composition of man. So what scientists and political thinkers see palpably today was very long ago told by prophets and philosophers of yore, who could look into the inside of things. However much man may appear to be unconcerned about the message of oneness, written by Nature in the very blood of his being and retold in sweetest melodies by all the messengers into whose ears God whispers the

¹ Ramsay Muir, *The Problem of Political Unity—The New Past*.

² R. M. MacIver, *The Modern State*, p. 248.

hidden truths, there is no escape ultimately from the realisation of unity.

Man's distinctiveness lies in his rationalism. When he does not or fails to use his brain, he becomes more foolish than animals, who live by instinct; when he abuses it, he only succeeds in defeating his own end. Rightly used, brain enables man to make out for himself his path of progress and keep off the risk of a fall. He knows then how to balance his movement along the steep road of his forward journey. It gives him a sense of the wholeness and regulates the parts to agree. It is by dint of his brain that man is what he is today, the lord of creation. Yet there is a point where his intellect should listen to the voice of heart. Over-emphasis of rationalism has been the tragedy of the *Homo Sapiens*—"so called in irony or prophecy," in the pungent words of H. N. Spalding.¹ Well may Sir Sarvapalli² feel agonised: "Is it a matter for surprise that some people believe that a malignant demon sat by the cradle of the infant human race?"

Our civilisation is built on money and machine, and heart and humanities have no place in it. Industrialisation has transgressed all

¹ *Civilization in East and West.*

² *Eastern Religions and Western Thought.*

- imaginable limits. Superfluities are being produced in heaps and food is running fearfully short. And the greatest irony is that almost always high intellectualism and rank heartlessness go together. No one can today make a living except at the cost of another, except by competition. Life is in the relentless grip of a disastrous economic struggle. 'Co-operation', which started playing its part since the days of the mammals, is now elbowed out by 'survival of the fittest'. This wonderful civilisation has kept man daily discovering and inventing new powers over nature and using these very powers practically to destroy himself. The result is :

"We are all rather unhappy. Our human achievements over the material powers, our control of physical force, our aeroplanes and our wireless, have not added to the peace of the mind or brought laughter back to life, or answered any questions about here and hereafter. We don't believe much in hereafter, and so we despair of the now, which is unsatisfying, troublesome, almost abominable sometimes, and stuffed with tragedy unless we have luck.

The genius of the human mind which has investigated so many secrets of nature with such marvellous skill, is not incapable of re-shaping its own destiny and frustrating the evil forces which are threatening the future life of mankind. I do not see many signs as yet that human intelligence is on the upgrade, or that man's spiritual nature is advancing to high

altitudes. On the contrary, there are signs of decadence and weakening will-power in many aspects of modern civilisation. But we have the possibility within ourselves of improving our minds and our manners. Upon that possibility depends the fate of civilisation and all that makes life good to us."¹

Let man take his lesson from the fate of the monstrous reptiles of pre-history. These fantastic demons are no more now. They owe their extinction to having a gigantic body and no brain. Man's calamity is this that he has allowed his brain to grow out of all proportion to the function of his heart. To have a heart today is to court ridicule and be condemned to failure. In the pride of intellect, man is subject to the conceit that he can cure all his ills by the application of intellectual formulas. The result is the merciless chasing of one intellect by another, and creation seems to have spun back to the Age of the Reptiles. They had not the brain to teach them the art of living together, while man has too much of it to cultivate the art with any constancy. His highly polished civilisation knows no law but that of "efficiency". In supreme disdain of the law of live and let live, the fate of whole peoples are tossed on the counters of efficient diplomats, bankers and industrialists. In place of the

¹ Sir Philip Gibbs.

massive claws and necks of the Mesozoic reptiles, the modern man has his subtle brain that quotes scriptures, weaves economics and preaches politics.

The endless cycle of idea and action,
 Endless invention, endless experiment,
 Brings knowledge of motion, but not of stillness ;
 Knowledge of speech, but not of silence ;
 Knowledge of words, and ignorance of the Word.
 All our knowledge brings us near to our ignorance,
 All our ignorance brings us nearer to death,
 But nearness to death no nearer to God.
 Where is the life we have lost in living?
 Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
 Where is the knowldge we have lost in information?
 The cycles of Heaven in twenty centuries
 Brings us farther from GOD and nearer to the Dust.¹

In the present age of advanced communication men of all races and places have been brought together. But they meet almost always only to exploit one another. And then they take shelter behind their all-sanctifying science, and plead in the name of 'struggle for existence'.

"It is our intellectual consciousness that breeds in us the feeling of separatist individuality, and this unnatural development is checked by artificial devices to bring men back into communal relations. Unfortunately, instead of strengthening the invisible bonds which bind man to man, irrespective of colour or race, the natural feeling of the oneness of humanity, these

¹ T. S. Eliot.

attempts keep men in separate camps hostile to one another. We are educated into the mystic worship of race and nation. By force and fraud, by politics and pseudo-religions, diplomats and priests exploit the baser passions of fear and greed and impose on us the deadly restraints of blood, race and nation, and thus accentuate the division in man's soul."¹

In search of political equality, man has lost sight of economic and social equality. The remedy lies in the ability to develop the outlook, firstly, that all the various needs of life—political and economic, social and cultural—have to be seen in their relative setting, and secondly, that unity is to be attained not merely amongst peoples of a creed or a community, of a country or even a continent, but of the whole human world. The task before modern man is to build up a whole human society with a new belief in human destiny :

"We think and believe that the new epoch of civilization will be described as the age of social man, in which society will be much more of an organized whole, tied together by the living relations of human beings, instead of mainly by the cold impersonal forces of profit and economic competition."²

The new epoch will not come by accident. It will have to be brought about by the conscious

¹ Sir S. Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*.

² Julian Huxley, *The Fortnightly*, July, 1941.

efforts of man, by the application of his energy, goodwill and sense of unity. In pre-historic times, vast natural changes formed the chapters of the history of life. Fortunes of biological groups were made or unmade in the wake of changed geological conditions. Glacial cycles caused the annihilation of the monstrous reptiles and mammoth animals. Three things are noticeable since the coming in of the *Homo Sapiens*. Firstly, the living world has ceased to be entirely reordered in reaction to mere scenic changes. Secondly, in pre-historic times life altered but a little in million years; in our days far more drastic changes occur in centuries, even in decades. And thirdly, these changes take place under human agencies and on the mental pivot. No doubt outward phenomena have wrought sweeping social and political changes. The railways have been responsible for many and rapid changes, which left to reformers would take ages to have been accomplished. Gun powder had radically altered the political relations between Europe and Asia. Radio and aeroplane are bound to do more for internationalism than all the preachings of humanists. Similarly, foreign policies of all countries may suddenly change not by a new political philosophy but by a common monetary system that may be evolved as a result of war economics. But then these are

man-made events, not made by Nature independently of man. That being so, the task of educating the mind, of creating an ideology, remains supreme. Accepting the likelihood of big changes to be wrought by the power of events, it is to be realised that the world of the coming man may not be just hammered into shape by some wars and inventions. Force of circumstances need not be denied; at the same time, artists have their part to play in moulding the future of man, philosophers in defining his outlook and the poet in fanning the heavenly fire to light up his soul.

THE COMMUNAL SITUATION

FOR ourselves, I look at our history this way. India's contact with Islam first introduced her to the West through Western Asia, and then the contact with Britain introduced Hindu-Muslim India to the great galaxy of modern nations and the expanding circle of modern thoughts. Both were necessary. Likewise, the rise of India as a self-governing and self-respecting dominion is necessary for the world at large. Such is my conception of India. I am not so much concerned

with whether the Hindu or the Muslim won this battle or that. I am not concerned with the race or community of a King or an Emperor. I should see things in the light of the laws of history and interpret events in terms of their contribution to the net advancement of mankind. The human future lies in the direction of cultivating the ideal of "mankind as a single nation".¹

This evolutionary course of Indian history appears to have recently sustained a severe setback. One hopes, however, it is to last only for a time. But it may as well be too late in the day if the acuteness of the disease is not readily brought under control. Already this unfortunate discord between the two major communities has served to clog more or less completely the wheel of progress. The minorities have been driven to despair. For, what may be the plan of partitioning the country but the counsel of grave despair? This, let us not mince matters, is the inevitable reaction to the rigidity with which is held the dogma of majority rights. That the majority should press their claims to the letter vitiates the spirit of democracy. What distinguishes democracy from other administrative institutions is that under it the good that emanates from the State is a common benefit of every individual belonging to it. It is definitely

¹ *The Quoran*, II.

sinning against democracy, squeezing the soul out of it, when in its name a majority claims to handle the apparatus of the Government in a way that reduces to mockery the rights of those that form the minorities. This is reverting practically to government by a group, only in place of nobility you have majority. It is domination none the less because it is the domination of numbers. The ideal that the State is for everyone in common is still far off. Minority problem is democracy's own, and "self-determination" is a solution that a national minority may have recourse to in dealing with an adverse majority.

At the same time, it is swinging to the other extreme to destroy the unity of a great and ancient country in the name of self-determination. Firstly, self-determination is a political concept, and political nationalism must be separated from religion. Secondly, self-determination must carry with it the necessary guarantee of inherent military and economic strength to defend its own. The doctrine of self-determination indicates a great advance in political thought, emphasising as it does the respect for human personality. But without collective security, international disarmament and mutual non-aggression, it is still an empty phrase. The pathetic hollowness of it is evident from the plight of the small States of

Central Europe, carved into shape by the Treaty of Versailles. Thirdly, it is not entirely an academic matter of constitution. It is ironical to talk of self-determination if you have not enough iron in your State, as also oil and coal. In view of these plain truths, the project of separate sovereign States on communal basis is indeed divorced from the realities of modern political conditions. At a time when even mighty nations cannot stand alone, should we in India go in for the same blood bath in which Europe is still swimming?

For what do we divide our great motherland? Is it just to say that we are two nations here—the Hindu and the Muslim? And in this, our position is indeed curious. We base our nationalism on religion, a basis long ago discarded, rather rightly, by Europe. And, where Europe is admittedly wrong, we base our two-nation theory on the doctrine of self-determination. What does Europe think today of her own discovery? Has it served the purpose for which it was brought in?

“The Treaty of Versailles attempted to solve the minority problem by Balkanizing Europe; almost it might be said that it created a separate State wherever it found a separate minority. But the history of the last twenty years should have taught us, if it

has taught us anything, that there is no solution of the minority problem along these lines.”¹

And having failed to do its expected job, it has gone further to create unexpected troubles :

“The self-destruction of European supremacy has brought about a world-wide national awakening, for which the war-slogan of national self-determination supplies the ideological basis. A revolutionary movement for national independence swept, and is still sweeping, over Central and Eastern Europe, the Near and the Far East, and even over large parts of the American Continent.”²

The present war has come upon the crisis of minority problem sought to be solved by implementing national self-determination. The principle of self-determination, evolved by the Peace of 1919, has, in its application to the States of Central Europe, eventually brought about the War of 1939. Having seen it all, India cannot afford to repeat the blunders of Europe and break up her unity on the lines of the Sudeten movement. Hers should be an increasing national federation instead of a warring national self-determination. The truth inherent in the theory of self-determination has to be reviewed against the background of this war, and the emphasis on nationalism cannot be permitted to be so far out

¹ C. E. M. Joad, *What Is At Stake, And Why Not Say So?* p. 99.

² Royal Institute of International Affairs, *Nationalism*, p. 236.

of proportion as may endanger and defeat the possibilities of a new international order. This war will have been fought in vain if the peace following it fails to take the sting out of nationalism. It will be a grievous frustration if this is not nationalism's last war and if through this cataclysm the political evolution of man does not move definitely on to internationalism.

European politics between the two Great Wars was formulated in terms of belligerent nationalism. In fact, it is about a whole century from the Revolutions of 1848 that may well be called the Age of Nationalism and Nation-States. Let us hope that presently will dawn the Age of Internationalism and the World-State. Self-conscious groupings of nations will, however, make no true internationalism inasmuch as pieces from all national anthems do not make up an international composition. To be true, it must be an organic relationship, a blending of moral sympathies, a feeling recognition of a man and a brother.

The craftsmanship in the architecture of peace lies with the West. The East will have to build more or less, with local variations, on the plan which the West adopts in rebuilding the world. But plans will fall to the ground if peace is conceived in terms of the solidarity of the West alone, if it is no more than this that Europe must

seek to preserve her "social cohesion by continuous expansion in Asia and Africa" in order only to "keep the wheels of her progressive prosperity revolving".¹ Be it clearly realised that domination by a group of nations is no more sacred than that by a nation. The very existence of domination is bound to beget rivalry, keeping war alive. Aggressors will ever crop up, and there will be a constant shuffling and reshuffling of diplomatic alliances, as long as there is a victim. Not 'Europe as a whole', but mankind as one, should be the ideal to animate the endeavour for the ushering in of a new social order.

In the circumstances, all our speculations on settlement, political or economic, between India and Britain or between the Congress and the League, have to be made, if it is to endure, along the line of what our world emerges into after the war. If the world at the end of the war is going to be a unit, it is absurd to think that in India any settlement lies in the way of disuniting the Hindu and the Muslim. Can India split up into communal kingdoms at a time when all that humanity has been struggling for, even through this war, is going to be realised in the formation of a world community? The supreme consideration to guide all planning authorities every-

¹ E. H. Carr, *Conditions of Peace*, pp. 113 and 255.

where in every undertaking must be this: Will it agree with the new world scheme? And India must fit her own constitutional arrangements into the general scheme of the post-war world politics. From the making of a tooth-brush to the building up of a constitution, no country can in the coming years after the war have sufficient choice to ignore world condition. Every aspect of reconstruction in every sphere of life has to be seen from the world perspective, which is the only post-war perspective.

At the moment we behave as if nationality as a force in human association will never become a spent force, with no chance of being superseded by any other new idea whose turn may have come. Mankind at one period of history had clung to religion with the same passionate excess as today we bitterly hate and fight one another in the name of nation. It is not known when and how nationalism will leave the fighting arena, but surely national politics and national economics, like all good things that are born in our mortal sphere, will retire into the background at the appropriate time. It is not known if the next development in the unit of human association will be from nationalism to internationalism, and whether it may come all at once without intermediate stages. But this much seems to be beyond

all doubt that the signs of a larger integration are unmistakable, that a super-national society is in view wherein human administration may be run with far less friction of power politics.

While the ideal of national independence is on the point of changing into that of international interdependence, it is but woefully backward to cut up life in this historic land into communal sections. Even so, we ill serve our community if we are not disengaged from communalism. We need drawing away from our communal politics in the manner that an artist walks away from his canvas to get a newer perspective. Our struggle is two-fold. We have simultaneously to harmonise communal with national, and national, again, with international aspects.

Nor can Britain do without giving India positive help to her creative endeavours for unity. She has a part to play in her own interest :

“We have to support unity and suspension of political and personal controversies. We say to the nationalist, ‘Set aside these things, and during the war unite and face the common peril.’ How can we expect them to respond to this? The way forward is not so simple as England seemed to think. . . . I say, if India can build up her own essential unity nothing on earth can prevent her having independence if she wants it, and it is our duty to build up

her strength and unity. She will see that it is to her advantage to remain linked to our group."¹

The Cripps Mission broke down. And it was confessed: "Past distrust has proved too strong to allow present agreement."² This distrust is but of recent growth. It was because of trust that India had accepted Britain: "India fell to British character."³ Now, what causes the distrust and keeps it going? There may well be more than one cause, but a very important one surely is the reaction of the communal situation. Britain may not have created the communal cleavage, but her presence has created the third-party complex. That complex could be neutralised and trust regained, if only Britain could join hands with India in reconstructing her unity. It is more than accidental connection that as Hindu-Muslim differences get more and more irreconcilable the distrust between Britain and India cuts deeper and deeper. It is now admitted that:

"Unless Britain solved the Indian problem, her Empire would break up. It was up to Britain to help India find the right solution, and not sit back saying: 'Unless you agree, we cannot do anything.'"⁴

At the same time India need not feel defeatist

¹ Sir George Schuster, House of Commons, Feb. 24, 1940.

² Sir Stafford Cripps: Delhi Broadcast on 11th April, 1942.

³ Marquis of Zetland, quoting Emerson.

⁴ Mr. George Gibson, Chairman of the T. U. C., reported in *The Hindustan Times*, March 5, 1941.

at her failure. She is at least in good company. Look at Europe now:

"For centuries the nations of this continent have lived together in a loose kind of society, often quarrelling fiercely and ignorantly, but always, in the fields of religion and philosophy, science and literature, art and music, giving and taking, lending and borrowing the one from the other. The common heritage of European civilization is the most splendid possession of man. No issue now dividing the nations of Europe is so great as to warrant its destruction."¹

Now, what makes a nation? And what is there to persuade a minority to feel like an entire nation? What is the base on which rests the will of a certain people to have a certain government of their own? What begets the conviction that they have an identical interest and to that extent are different from others? What inspires them to hold some values in their common esteem and guard them jealously? What draws the line round a particular group of people in so marked a manner that gives them the largest common measure of agreement (for a nation accommodates many a coterie) and urges them to develop a common cause against outsiders? What is that mysterious perimeter—that bond of nationality?

¹ H. A. L. Fisher, *A History of Europe*.

"It is vain to search for any common quality or definite interest which is everywhere associated with nationality. No one of the social possessions of mankind, whether language or distinctive custom or religion or territory or race-consciousness or economic interest, or even the tradition of political life, is inseparable from it. In fact, scarcely any two nationalities seem to find their positive support in the same objective factors. The Swiss have no common language, the Jews no common territory, and as for common race, it is nearly always a delusion."

National minorities have been defined by the Treaty of Versailles (Art. 91) as inhabitants of a country "who differ from the majority population in race, language and religion". To go back to an earlier authority,² "geographical limits" make an important contribution to the growth of a nation, but "the strongest" of all elements is "the possession of a national history, and consequent community of recollections". A recent exponent,³ however, lays greatest stress on "the reaction against outside interference. That, more than anything else, has fostered the development of group-consciousness. Pressure from without is probably the largest single factor in the process of national evolution". Let us briefly examine

¹ R. M. MacIver, *The Modern State*, p. 123.

² J. S. Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*.

³ Julian Huxley, *Race in Europe*.

these points and see how well do they apply to India.

Does race provide the foundation of nationhood? Directly facing the query stand the English and the German, the Chinese and the Japanese, locked in deadly embrace today. The Germans no doubt have spun an elaborate myth-cum-philosophy on Nordic supremacy. The existence of a pure race, however, is hypothetical. What exists is the type—a Nordic type, a Mediterranean type. Racialism,¹ an important aspect though, is not the synonym for nationalism. At least in India it is out of question. The vast bulk of the population has too profuse a mixture to claim any racial distinction. By racial mark India can hardly be called a land of two nations.

As the vehicle of communication, language is indeed a vital element of nationality. Often a phrase reveals a vista of historical association, often a turn of expression is so innate and exclusive to a language that it reflects the mind of the whole people speaking it. The love of the motherland has invariably been interwoven with that of the mother tongue. Language easily becomes an inheritance of passionate affection. Only the other day Madras was taught Hindi

¹ For fuller information see Huxley, Haddon & Carr-Saunders, *We Europeans*.

under *lathi* charge. On the contrary, we need hardly forget that Hindustani was evolved—not manufactured—mind you—by the common urge of the Hindu and the Muslim to understand each other. Our Hindustani is the outstanding historical proof that the Muslim régime represents a period of creative unity when India had the will to be a nation, and the will was moulded into shape. To the extent that language is the identity of a nation, India, on the strength of Hindustani, is more or less one.

Now about religion. Islam, for instance, united a considerable part of mankind. It functioned as a spiritual brotherhood under the Caliph. As time went on, there appeared in different geographically unified areas different kingdoms, forging independent, even rival, political groupings. Lesser loyalties were nursed, and the denominations—Arabs, Turks, Egyptians, Mongols, Persians went criss-cross, cutting to fragments the one and the otherwise indivisible Islamic people. National consciousness militated against religious brotherhood. In fact, religion united and nationalism disunited. So then a common religion in itself is no guarantee of preserving national identity. No wonder that common religion does precious little to prevent the appetite of Christian nations for the blood of brothers in faith. One

religion permits within its fold many and warring nations. On the contrary, religion, it appears, had nearly to die in order that nationalism could be born :

“Sentiment of nationality did not really become a factor of the first moment in politics till the religious passion of the 16th and 17th centuries had almost wholly subsided, and the gospel of political freedom preached by the American and French Revolutionaries had begun to fire men’s minds.”¹

Let us look at the other side. Is the religious difference in our country, so absolute and irreconcilable? We hear so much of it. But only learned men can tell you from books where does the religion of one community differ from that of another, and it will not be altogether wrong to say that those who so happen to know of these differences have too little religion in their life as they live it. The common folk with whom, however, religion is a living reality, are seldom so much as conscious of such differences. The masses of the two communities have between them a lot of common observances, drawing freely from each other’s rituals and festivals, even paying joint homage to saints and shrines of different orders, as the inevitable result of living together through historic centuries. They have of course some

¹ Bryce, *Studies in History and Jurisprudence*, i, p. 268.

notion of their broad differences, but then these are more than mundane, rather inspiring mutual tolerance, even reverence. On such evidence of the mosaic of customs that we daily see with our own eyes, even amidst our recent communal clashes, it should be clearly against the purpose of history to be victims of any new cult of disintegration.

In regard to "geographical limits", India is, in spite of being a vast sub-continent, a geographical unit, fit to house a whole nation within her immense boundaries. Of course, smaller units may be advisable, even necessary, for administrative efficiency, as she is now planned into so many Provinces. There may as well be a redistribution of blocs on a linguistic basis or according to physical features or according to communal population. But this arrangement does not take away from India her right to be a great unit that Nature has made her.

Besides, Europe's¹ failure in redrawing territorial lines and transferring populations in order to settle the problem of her national minorities should warn India against the futility of frontier revisions. 'A most important basis of the Peace

¹ For fuller information see Macartney, *National States and National Minorities*.

of 1919 was revision of frontiers. But the war of 1939 indicates beyond doubt that it is a hopelessly futile basis. As to exchange of population there has been a good deal of trial, no doubt. Yet the very conclusion, in the last resort, of numerous Minority Treaties is but the proof that men (particularly, agricultural men) do not prefer to leave the land of which once they become native in favour of building new national homesteads or even returning to the mother country. It should be reasonable then that we have got to get at a workable arrangement without having recourse to those radical and fantastic solutions.

To refer to the very important point raised by Mill, that a nation is a number of people who share a history and have a common heritage of recollections, who feel equally on the same past and nurse the same pride or shame. The history of India is peculiar. There have been periods of conquest followed by settlement. The contact passed through successive reactions till the adventurous invaders turned into inseparable neighbours. Naturally enough, there are memories that give joy to one community and sorrow to another. But the points of cleavage are of passing interest. Of more abiding value is the common heritage, the growth of a composite civilisation.

It is this conception of the whole that today must guide our younger generation :

“What I would impress upon you here, you students of the Nizam's College, is that Muslims and Hindus have a common history and a splendid common history here in India extending over several hundred years.”¹

Judging too from the very practical position as held by Huxley, India is a nation, inasmuch as the Hindu and the Muslim on numerous battle fields mingled their blood in a common stream of resistance to the foreign invader whenever he put in an appearance and whatever was his race or religion. The history of medieval India is replete with instances of the Hindu fighting on his full initiative for his Muslim Emperor or neighbour against invading Muslims.

By no known standard of nationality then can we establish that India is a country of two nations. Still let us grant that India is not a nation. Very well. What after all is the harm if India is even a multinational country? For a multinational country too can form one single State. A State is not identical with a nation, though a nation generally has a State. It has been demonstrated by U.S.S.R. The Soviet success appears to be due to the ability to prevent senti-

¹ Sir Akbar Hydari, quoted in *What India Thinks*, edited by C. Roberts.

ments of nationality from influencing the political business of the State. The concern of the State is to secure a common well-being of all the people who have agreed to live together, having subordinated their differences in race, religion and culture to the material interests of protection, development and solidarity. It is a most popular fallacy to conceive of nationality as out and out a political thing, while it is in the main a psychical one. It is a sentiment of community, drawing nourishment from the substance of the mind. Soviet Russia provides this substance by means of Cultural Autonomy. A State is built on political unity, and a nation on cultural unity :

“It is national institutions which form the genius, the character, the tastes and manners of a people, which make it itself and not another people, which inspire it with that ardent patriotism which is based upon customs that cannot be uprooted.”¹

More than anything else, it is culture that may be taken for the objective mark of nationality. It is more or less : a community of feeling, a general agreement in habits and beliefs in spite of vast differences in details, impress of a common fold through the association of doing things in nearly the same characteristic way, sharing

¹ C. E. Vaughan, quoted in *Nationalism*, published by Royal Institute of International Affairs.

similar tastes and notions of good and bad, right and wrong, in arts and social values, even in food, drink and amusement, cultivating like passions and prejudices. It is these familiar things that after all build into a certain number of people a peculiar conviction that they belong together as apart from others. Political atmosphere and destiny do no doubt make a large contribution to the conviction of this oneness, yet the real national factors are the mental factors that help in the growth of a kind of identity through the integration of common habits of day to day life. Even the geographical patriotism for the sake of the country derives its main force from our passionate love of the culture it embodies. Culture is the soul of nationality, while the State is its body. It is, however, through the political machinery of the State that culture can be guaranteed or defended. The belief that a nation has some rights and the practice that these rights are guarded by the State—these help the fusion of the ideology of nationality with that of the State.

Politicians know this, and so do they raise such a cry for safeguarding cultures. In the Central European States created by the League Treaties cultural security was sought to be guaranteed to national minorities. Some have Cultural Councils and some have Cultural Auto-

nomy Law. Here in our country in the middle ages cultural freedom had not to depend on constitutions. Our saints and artists, to whose influence Kings and Emperors often yielded, established by convention a freedom in the cultural life of the people that, with all her high finish of political technique, modern Europe has tried in vain to achieve. Should we cast away our own proved values, misguided by the grandiose professions of European politics, which has yet to prove its capacity for peace? Let us not overlook the deeper homogeneity of Indian culture and be overcome by false fears.

Yet when somehow we are subject to the wrong belief that our cultures are mutually irritative, the situation calls for a remedy. It is the belief that matters, for it is the reality as long as it is believed in, wrongly though. And as this belief grows out of mutual disbelief, the grounds must be very carefully examined. Let there be no hazy notions of our grievances just as there must be no lack of appreciation of each other's points. Let us have a competent Cultural Commission to inquire into our misgivings, to rationalise our attitude, to tabulate our demands and draw up a clear-cut catalogue of political safeguards, to protect different communities from one another. At the same time, while having safe-

event. The Disarmament Conference met in February 1932 and dragged on till in October 1933 Germany left it, for Hitler was already in power in March 1933. The Conference failed. It seems, it failed according to plan. For no member was in a mood to succeed. And the logical upshot of it has been the total war of 1939, for there will be aggression as long as the moral order is not established, a common moral order for all States. Pacts and protocols have marched on in pompous procession, but they have ill equipped Europe to escape war.

Europe is enmeshed in her fascination for formulas. She flatters herself that her politics can meet any and every situation. But can human relations be wholly moulded by mere mechanisation? Has she not failed to bring about a condition that could set at rest the minority trouble in Central Europe? The whole political world is now infested with minority problem :

"In recent years within the British Commonwealth it has caused troubles still unresolved in Ireland and Palestine, while within the European States set up after the last war it led to rivalries and dissensions which offered the chief opportunities for the success of Hitler's power policy."¹

¹ Sir George Schuster and Guy Wint, *India and Democracy*, p. 349.

The mental climate in Ireland was particularly unhealthy :

“The fact that Irishmen were represented at Westminster even more fully than Englishmen did not stop the movement for Irish Home Rule.”¹

The problem has been solved in South Africa between the British and the Dutch, and in Canada between the British and the French. It has been observed in regard to the latter case :

“Is there any hope of ultimately creating in India the psychological atmosphere which has been so helpful in Canada ?”²

But our political leaders do not bother about psychological contributions; they see nothing beyond pacts.

We should be able to realise that the problem is political only up to a certain point, beyond that it is philosophical. The mental is the fundamental issue. The less apparent may not be less vital. In an approach to problems of sentiments, of relations, one is bound to be philosophical even at the risk of appearing vague. Macartney, reviewing the various constitutional mechanisms for the amelioration of the lot of National Minorities in Europe, has been compelled to admit that “the real root of the trouble lies in the

¹ Mrs. Sidney Webb, *The Drawbacks of Democracy*.

² Schuster and Wint, *India and Democracy*, p. 370.

philosophy of the national State", and arrives at his "basic postulate": "if once the mentality is correct, the machinery will soon be found".¹

So, as in Europe, the problem in India has to be solved in the minds of men. The battles have to be fought on the psychological front. And, when the mind will be cleared of all obsessions, any political formula will be readily acceptable, and gradually improved upon; until that is done, the best formula can, as we see, produce no effect. On the other hand, it is India's tradition to treat the inside malady more than the outside. The life and works of the Faquirs did most to unite the masses of Hindus and Muslims of the medieval days in common sentiments; the State had practically no business in this respect. And the masses of India have changed very little in the matter of yielding to social, cultural and spiritual influences. While, curiously, our good men and true have not cared to harness this fact to the end of unity, a perverse use of it is in vogue, employing Sadhus and Mullahs in communal organisations. However, should India blindly copy the West even where it has failed? Should she not think of making a contribution in the light of her own talent and tradition? Has India no politics of her

¹ Macartney, *National States and National Minorities*, pp. 421 & 468.

own, has she exhausted all her gifts? No nation can solve its problems by wholly copying even a successful technique of another, whereas it can at least do some good to itself by avoiding the mistakes committed by other nations. All this exposes us to the great pathos of Hegel's famous saying: "The only thing that men learn from history is that men learn nothing from history."

OUR HISTORY AND UNITY

EVERYTHING in the world is amove. Not the spheres in the heavens alone, but the entire procession of life on our planet as well. Man has evolved along with his brethren of the animal world. But ever since he was endowed with intellect his onward march has been a conscious process. He has created religion and science, poetry and art, built palaces and cities, railways and factories, has in fact complicated his life to an alarming extent. Environments have according to the laws of evolution gone on affecting his life, now helping him, now obstructing him in the pursuit of his activities. His history is nothing but the story of the evolution of life, individual and corporate.

Now, history itself, like other branches of knowledge, has evolved from very small beginnings and proceeded from myths and legends to crude court chronicles, and from national propaganda to detached quest of truth. It must now take yet another leap, from the scientific to the creative.

Herodotus wrote the first proper history. But he was more or less occupied with giving expression to the militant aggressiveness of Greece and inciting her to fight and conquer Persia. Through various phases, the art of writing history has passed till there have been adopted scientific methods of searching and sifting data and drawing authentic conclusions therefrom. History thus written is called scientific history, and is the accepted style of today.

But, unfortunately, with all its vaunted emancipation, history has not always been able to extricate itself out of the narrow groove of national prejudice and propaganda. In spite of this, however, individual historians have pursued scientific methods and invaded the obdurate past with admirable tenacity. They have, to the great wonder and enlightenment of mankind, dug out necessary materials from the very womb of the earth, ransacked the whole world from caves and forests to the libraries of ancient peoples and

searched even the rubbish heaps and kitchen middens of men long since dead. Thanks to their indomitable energy, exemplary patience and fine acumen, history is no longer a facile hearsay. In the hierarchy of knowledge today, history is assigned a very high place because of its breadth of vision, its standard of veracity, and its high purpose.

The historian of India too has taken up his work in right earnest, and is confidently developing his resources to write the history of his great country on the lines laid down by the masters of scientific history in the West. But the unhappy part of it is that very often the essential quality of responding to the living problems of life is sacrificed to the erudition of ministering to mere academic curiosity. The worker prizes his technique more than the objective.

The sad result of all this is intellectual mechanisation. The creative machinery is clogged with stones and statuary, plates and inscriptions—things valuable enough but far too remote at times from the immediate needs of our progressive life. Even the best of virtues must needs be balanced. Over-specialisation too is a deadly vice. Our historian must have his ears attuned to the call of life, think out of the realities of life, and see that by the gift of his knowledge he

power into the hands of his people to overcome the evils that surround them. Thus alone can he reach the altitudes of creativeness..

Let us talk more concretely. India today is torn with communal dissensions. Much bad blood is flowing, and daily the situation is worsening. And the evil is no longer confined to sordid politicians but is fast spreading—it is terrible to contemplate—even to innocent school-going children. What is education worth if it cannot train our mind in the art of living decently and honourably, with grace and charity? Of all branches of knowledge it is history which has in this respect a special responsibility and is moreover best equipped for exerting a humanising and wholesome influence towards improving the mental climate of the people. Communalism has little to stand upon if Indian history is studied in its true perspective.

Our historian has to realise that before his very eyes vast masses of his people, in sheer ignorance of their country's history, are being lured away into a veritable morass of prejudice and passion. This prejudice amongst ourselves is too conspicuous to be overlooked, too notorious to be neglected. As an illustration of the several forms of prejudice that befog understanding, Herbert Spencer has cited the case of a Wahabi

exclaiming at the sight of a corpulent Hindu :
“What a fine log for the hell fire !” Has not
our historian anything to contribute to the clearing
of this fog; to the dissipation of this prejudice ?

He is indulging in an inexcusable luxury if
at a time like this he chooses to be busy with high-
brow researches. He is failing in his noble and
singular vocation when with all his equipments
he cannot attack the living problem of his day.
He must be able to apply his learning to the task
of dispelling this dangerous type of passion and
ignorance which is demoralising more than one-
fifth of the world's population. He does but scant
justice to his gifts and ill serves the high purpose
of historical knowledge. It is hardly enough to
be a stylist and a technician. The true historian
must be able to unravel the experience of bye-gone
ages with a definite end, that of correcting the
present and moulding the future. Dignity does
not lie so much in the knowledge as in the service,
not so much in a fascinating mannerism as in
loyalty to life. One might go further and say--
the historian condemns himself whose knowledge
does not directly and definitely lead his people to
triumph over the forces of evil that thrive on their
ignorance of their country's tradition of unity. It
is in this light that our history has to be pressed
to the service of unity.

The great historian of the greatest Moghul was of no mean assistance to the emperor in his endeavour to unite India and Indians. The consideration that weighed with Abul Fazl has today acquired a far more pressing reality, and our historian has before him the serious task of bringing his intellectual industry and creative imagination to bear on this stupendous reality. The spirit of *Ayin-i-Akbari* was to publish the fact how the emperor Akbar tried to "convert the thorny field of enmity into a garden of amity and friendship," while the *Akbar Nama* held before the emperor himself the ideal that if a king were to "become fit for the exalted office" he had to "regard all sects of religion with the single eye of favour, and not be-mother some and be-step-mother others."

It should be understood that the necessity of Islam was not confined to Arabia. Islam was wanted to give anew to the world the knowledge of the ancient East and West—of India and Greece, while it was also to bring forth its own simple faith. This faith, already tinged by the Persian mysticism, was further coloured by the Indian atmosphere. And the *Bhagats* and *Derwishes* soon combined to bring out a Hindustani version that Hindus and Muslims alike of India recognised as their common heritage.

The Afghan rulers of India, who were but recent Central Asian converts to Islam, were called upon to confer with the culture of this land. Instead of importing soldiers they had to get supplies of savants from Arabia and Persia. So it was that the court of Alauddin Khilji was not without many erudite Maulvis. It is not important that they were generally orthodox Maulvis; the real significance is that even the warlike Sultan had to think of playing his cultural card. And this cultural competition, through various phases of rivalry, natural on such occasions, moved on to the broader harmony of the *Ibadat Khana* of the emperor Akbar. This is a more vital part of history than the accounts of battles and broils. Hindus and Muslims alike of the pre-British days had caught a glimpse of a much higher method of settling their disputes. Our much-maligned medievals had almost mastered the art of raising politics up to the foot of the Throne of Heaven. In fact the Muslim history of thousand years here is the history of the evolution of unity in India.

DO WE MEAN UNITY?

A LADY of rank, in a novel by Upton Sinclair, is pressed to explain how her husband, so deep in vices, can be all the same such a sparkling talker. She candidly replies: "Civilisation demands it". Ay, indeed, civilisation demands it! The same convention of civilisation prompts us to appear that we are all too anxious to do mighty things to crush out communalism right now, while in reality the evil is allowed to grow lustily under the comfortable shelter of make-believe. Between a faith and a profession one easily recognises which is which.

Communalism has not yet stirred up in us the moral sense of injury. We are still moving blindly in the vicious circle of political opportunism. The thought has yet to ripen into national conviction, and conviction to overflow into constructive action. A sincere belief does not leave us quiet. There is an irresistible urge behind it. It is an exacting virtue and we are made to pay for it in due measure. Where we can remain indifferent, it is plain we have been merely at play.

While our teeming masses are struggling, overwhelmed in a flood of hunger, disease and

ignorance, while the bulk of our young intelligentsia are stagnating in a careerless, resourceless and visionless existence, there is yet a deep recess where, with its immortal fire still burning, lies the real India. This real India is certainly not represented by the upper class society reeking of sophisticated culture. Nor have our snobbish aristocrats and unimaginative intellectuals any more of the real India about them. A few exploiting merchants, a few money-making lawyers, a few intriguing politicians—least of all do they make the real India.

Most of the measures against communalism have been more or less put up in terms of politics. Political deals and political propaganda have been at the bottom of nearly all our unity moves. They have been resorted to more for the opportunities they offer to emphasise our party propaganda and formulate party demands. But for a reconciliation purely for the sake of human unity, we have little time and less money to spare. It is sacrifice that indicates the depth of our affection: The reality of our feeling is measured by what price we pay for it. Compared to the stately expenditure of wealth and energy after election campaigns, party organisation and the sort, the work of clearing the mental background of the unity of Hindustan has cost us precious little, with the

exception, of course, of holding *pourparlers* and releasing political correspondence. For the expression of our furious hatred and wrath against communalism, we have, no doubt, profuse wordy emotion, plenty of ethereal gifts that will never take any substantial form.

It seems, however, we love to nurse the problem and then seek to get up an atmosphere of stir and bustle. 'There are so many mighty men of ours, and they vie with one another in putting forth the most fascinating regrets about the existence and continuance of communal conflict and corruption. But all their devout determination ends in the rhetoric of denouncing the devil. They are too ready to bring colour and sentiment into play, but there their enthusiasm evaporates, their responsibility ceases, with the delivery of the sermon. Their sense of beauty in speech is not permitted to be projected into action. In fact, all the world over the theatres are resounding with heroics. In no other period of history had humanity been so helplessly enthralled in the lure of fine phrases. Oratory must come under ordinance. The irony of man's life on this planet has been that he has ever been able to talk empty platitudes and to reconcile utter heartlessness with high intellectuality.

The truth is, we are merely tickled but not

in the least disturbed. Well, disturbance would have produced madness that such evils are not exterminated. The thought of this cruel and calamitous evil would have been enough to drive us into insanity. Speaking of lunatics, those poor victims of uncompromising thinking, a great American¹ humorist piquantly observes: "I confess I think better of them than many who hold the same notions, and keep their wits and appear to enjoy life very well". The humorist may be lightly dismissed by our wise men, but they must have an uncomfortable reflection of themselves when they find the astute joint-othor² of the Versailles Treaty saying:

"I wonder whether we appreciate how severely our fine verbal civilization suffers in spite of our sometimes excellent intention. We intend the good: we make a parade of the best, yet, apparently with equal indifference, we do what is wrong and sometimes even what is right."

The spirit of disunion and dissension is stalking abroad over the whole country with a malignant glee. Contrary to the need for unity and understanding, large sections of the Indian people have applied themselves to the task of disruption and distraction with a tragic earnest-

¹ *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.*

² Clemenceau, *The Evening of My Thought.*

ness. Racial and religious denominations, communal and provincial demarcations, so easily lend themselves to support our claims of sectional leadership by exciting passion and prejudice. We seem to forget that we Indians are and have to be one great people, and that there was a time when we were able to harmonise our various notes, and that the lyric of Indian nationalism was sung—*Hindustán Hamará*—only the other day by the poet Iqbal. We have also patiently to ascertain how far true is our tradition of separatism, of nursing the community mind. We have, again, to rationalise the communal demand; to flare up at the mention of the thing is no less harmful to the cause of nationalism than to let communalism leap beyond its normal limits.

But nothing has been done. While our busybodies sway between mud-throwing and pret-making, our good men content themselves with saying good words. Some persons have reached the heights of transcendental fineness in the rôle of appearing sincere. It is hard to believe that there can be no tangible achievement in the course of so many years of our efforts to realise that we are a nation in spite of sincerity in a large number of our leading men. Leadership has perhaps become bankrupt, and it seeks to hold its own by

means of excellent talk delivered in an excellent ritualistic fashion. We do not want to pay for our leadership but only to be paid for it. This is the basic problem before our country, and what we most need is the advent of a massive satirist of the power of an Aristophanes or a Voltaire to show ourselves up.

I leave alone politics and economics, for today everything is sanctified by their name. What to me seems most grievous is that communalism has poisoned the springs of social goodwill and killed beauty in the lives of a people gifted with high-souled culture. If not wisdom, at least our culture must help us to correct our vulgarity, our aesthetic taste must repel as by instinct at the sight of ugly communalism. Indeed, a nation can ill afford to overlook what makes life noble and beautiful. The awful ramifications of illwill can hardly be suffered any longer to go on blunting our sense of the sublime, whence the ridiculous is not far off.

Culture, however, is terribly misunderstood. Culture, in its common acceptance, is possession of knowledge; yet, intellectualism is the least part of true culture, which consists mostly in response to human relations, in diffusing grace or life. Culture loses its virtue and becomes a veritable curse when this grace is lost.

in the touch of the heart, it becomes merely mechanical in knowledge and degenerates into a cultivation of drawing-room courtesies. When insincerity proceeds from highly cultivated minds, its destructive force acquires subtle power and breaks into all the recesses of goodness. It is this kind of insincerity to which is to be traced the agony of the modern world, wherein hypocrisy has become a science. If only a millionth part of the fine sayings that are being daily uttered in the world of today were meant to be acted upon by their brilliant authors we could verily have paradise established on earth.

The prospect is so desperate that the only hope seems to lie in merciful Nature. If she will graciously rebarbarise humanity and bring us back to the stage of crude ignorance and nude truthfulness, then and then alone will humanity have a chance to revive. Else the experiment with human creation may have to be given up. Anyway, however much we may think of our glorious mankind, Evolution will have little care and compunction if we have to be buried even without an elegy.

TO THE ROOT OF THE MATTER

WITH the Cripps Mission India seems to have entered into yet another new phase of internal disunion. No doubt, there is more desire for understanding, even some active will to unity. But why this progressive failure? My apprehension is that the cause lies somewhere in the line of action that is followed. Till today, whatever we have done to remove or reduce our communal conflict has rather been confined to negotiating pacts. In the first place, our leaders are busy evolving a formula that may all at once transform illwill into amity. But the age of alchemy is gone. Some, however, do not believe in the miracle of a pact; They too are fatally drawn to it. For they are impatient. They say they have no time to lose in long-term measures. In effect, however, they have spent several decades, ever offering their quick remedies every time they face the trouble. And still the method of ready solution holds on, while bit by bit, through long years of futile negotiation, the conflict deepens from 'one seat here or another seat there' to a partition of the country.

There is another reason why we are just pact-

deep. For, we follow the method of the West—the West that is the embodiment of statesmanship, that is nothing if not ‘practical’, that has an uncanny vision of ‘realities’. The pity of it is, this very West moves on in stately pomp through an appalling wreckage of treaties and league, pacts and unions, till it has faced the War of 1939. This War stares at Europe with the big query if its national business is a going concern.

Hinduism is wedded to universalism. The faith of Islam is built on the brotherhood of man. Today a few intellectuals of Europe appear to visualise, dimly though, a federal world, a world society. Some four thousand years ago, the Hindus who worshipped the Sun looked up to the God of the Universe. And I do not know if India was a nation or not. But this much is true of ancient India that her two Epics—the Mahabharata and the Ramayana—formed the centre of culture of a whole people from Katmandu to Kanyakumari and from Amarnath to Chandranath at a time when probably there were no controlled press and radio. May be, the two Epics took centuries to be so implanted. But this is known to history that Sri Samkaracharya in the course of sixteen years could create a response to his creed in the heart of a whole people over a vast

sub-continent at a time when there were no express trains and aeroplanes. Could all this happen if India were not one and her people not used to think with one mind?

The Muslim came to India with a living faith of his own in the equality of man. Gradually he entered into the diversified unity of India, which became his "native country". There developed a common way of living. Hindu and Muslim traits became inseparably mixed up. Thousands of Hindus and Muslims joined together in paying homage to the Darga of Pirana Sahib in Gujarat, that of Nizamuddin Aulia in Delhi and to the tomb of Lal Shahabaz of Sind, and the practice continues even today. More. The two peoples mingled their blood in a common stream of resistance to foreign invaders. There again, I do not know if India was a nation or not.

The past is not always wholly wiped out. Often it enters vitally into the present. It is all right when we understand the past. But we are in for a dire calamity when we have wrong notions of our heritage and abuse it. This is what has happened with our Hindu-Muslim relations of today.

Modern conditions have brought about political and economic competition in our ancient land. We do not seem to have the means of treating

a modern malady in the way the world at large is attempting it. In our embarrassment we have only to refer back to our past. That is not so fatal. On the contrary, it would have proved to be a boon could we get the right perspective of our past. For, after all, the intellectual machinery of the progressive European nations, gigantic as it is, is no power for peace. This intellect knows no technique of tying the world together but with the cold and brittle thread of profit and loss. It is beyond its vision to master the arts of forging the living links of human relations.

It is not by turning to the past but by misrepresenting it that we happen so much to befog our issues increasingly. We could at least have succeeded in creating an atmosphere of understanding if we had appealed to the best traditions of the days when a long roll—occasionally interrupted though—of rulers and teachers, administrators and artists, were busy building up an India which is as much Muslim as Hindu.

The cause of concord owes its defeat not so much to our bringing in religious and such like talks to a problem that is essentially political and economic in its make-up as to these talks being based on false notions and inspired by fantastic loyalties. In fact, it is not religion but the misconception of it that breeds trouble. We need not

be surprised that thinkers in the West are now anxious for the application of spiritual power in religion to the task of winning the war and peace :

“There is but one remedy for the two-fold canker which for three centuries has been menacing the heart of European civilization—the lack of moral principle in the exercise of the power that knowledge brings, and the progressive secularization of men’s outlook to wit the restoration of faith in Christianity.”¹

And commenting on this, it has been said :

“When the very existence of civilization is at stake it is a matter of deep practical moment that spiritual forces no less than armed might should be marshalled in its defence.”²

It is a severe problem of history that at such a critical hour of national life each community should indulge in the illusion that it is his heritage to be antagonistic to the other. False tradition is a formidable danger. A very great deal of our communal discord thrives on our ignorance of the true history of the medieval India. The message of that history must now be broadcast to correct our passion and direct our vision, and create a feeling for co-operative action. Only when this new outlook is there shall we be

¹ W. G. de Burgh, *Sources of the Present World Trouble*, the Hibbert Journal, April 1940.

² Sir Alexander MacEwen, *Heroic Humanism*, the Hibbert Journal, October, 1940.

able to work out a political formula of unity; otherwise, however much logical, the formula will be a futile one under the stress of the psychology of distrust.

A compromise dictated by party interests of politicians will not differ in nature and substance from the various political pacts of convenience or necessity with the wreckage of which the history of the world abounds, right from the Stone Age to the present age of poison-gas. In the very nature of things, patch-work has only a very precarious existence, and cannot solve any fundamental problems. It may satisfy mere busy-bodies but not those with deeper insight and longer vision.

Always precarious, and everywhere opportunist, such patched-up unity has no place anywhere, certainly not in India, where the required unity exists as a matter of historical fact. It permeates the very essence of Indian life, and colours the entire being of the Indian. This country has absorbed numberless foreigners in the course of its long history, and yet they have most of them been able to preserve their cultural and religious individuality. The Muslims of the country are no exception to this statement. The overwhelming majority of them are Indian in blood and race, just as they are different, in the same measure, from Muslims in other countries.

Centuries of common life with the Hindus in India, common pleasures and common vicissitudes, common enemies and common victories have forged links between them which cannot be broken with ease or benefit to any one.

I have no desire to enter the realm of controversial politics; my vision is centred more on the permanent tendencies of history, on the basic facts of Indian life. If these could be constantly kept before the mind of the reading public in India, I feel sure that we should be attacking the present evil of superficial disunity at its very root. Political compromises of one sort or another are in their very nature ephemeral. Not even the fact that freedom cannot be won except by means of a compromise between political Hindus and political Muslims can make that compromise a thing of any value or permanence.

A political compromise will be necessary for the achievement of unity, but it will be but a brittle unity if not vitalised with a unity of thought. If we cannot grow a common thinking, a mere mechanical pact will not help. Europe depending on politics alone could not solve her minority problem. And she has thus kept herself in a chronic state of war, far worse than our communal conflict. Something more than mere

politics is necessary. That something is a matter of the spirit, a sense of brotherhood.

At the same time, it does little good merely to talk of brotherhood. It is at best a platitude to say that Hindus and Muslims of India are brothers of a common mother country. Indeed, they are; and the initial need is to be inspired with a faith in this feeling of brotherhood. Without that faith we cannot have the readiness to accept mutual obligations and undergo the sacrifices that the fulfilment of all good causes demands. For faith feeds the lamp with the oil to burn. Not logic but belief generates the will to action. Yet, to create a conviction and sustain it through trials, a rationalisation of the objective is indeed very necessary. To move our mind towards Hindu-Muslim brotherhood, we have to remove the obstacles that stand between the two. A good many of these obstacles are real while a good many again are just obsessions. But, anyway, the uprooting of these interests and illusions is bound to involve tremendous sacrifices on both sides. The point mainly is this: is our feeling of brotherhood so real and acute that we will not mind any sacrifices necessary for the attainment of the common objective?

Besides, unity must be realised as a value by itself. It is to be used not merely as a means

of overcoming the Britisher in India. The Britisher will be overcome the moment the unity is achieved, but the unity will not be achieved if it cannot be derived from no higher inspiration than a political opportunism. We must be open to the moral influence of unity for its own sake, for its human excellence. Without that influence we cannot grow the mentality that we have got to know our differences—for brothers have differences—only in order to break through them and reach the common goal. All large human groupings are the products of the higher conception of unity in spite of differences. It is by resolving differences, not by their complete absence, that human associations have been widened.

It is essentially the classic tragedy of "a mind diseased". At its root it is a problem of attitude, a psychic complex. Few institutions can be of such assistance to the clearing of the psychic background as the Press with its guiding influence on public life. Hence it is I would venture to suggest :

Let all influential Dailies open out a column, say once a week, under the caption UNITY FORUM. Let them print under it such news as indicate goodwill on both sides of the two communities. For, even in the midst of wanton ravage and bloodshed, love and neighbourliness do operate.

Human goodness cannot be altogether extinguished. Indeed, there always are, during the riots and within the riot areas, actual cases where Muslims must have escorted Hindus to places of safety and arranged for shelter just as Hindus have done the same. Those good Muslims and good Hindus do not themselves need any publicity. But it is necessary for the sake of something higher than catering to curiosity. These noble activities have to be made widely known in order to instil faith into the hearts of those who do not yet despair and still work for unity and amity. These news should greatly add to the forces of peace—forces that will bring about the great day to come when all sons and daughters of India will be united in love in the name of humanity and of the Almighty. Brutality is let loose, and we get news of atrocities, sometimes exaggerated, but harrowing enough even without exaggeration. But examples of goodwill and brotherliness, functioning all the while, hardly deserve to be lost in the volume of crimes.

Let this Forum¹ also invite political leaders, unpolitical savants and thinking young men and women to contribute short notes and articles on

¹ A University may also organise extension lectures with a monthly programme on these lines. So could education attack the problem.

various problems of history, politics, economics, race, religion, language, culture, etc., that are involved in our communal issue. An organised publication of the kind should go a long way to create the impression that Unity is abroad, and to beget a unity habit of thought. It is for the preparation of the mental background of unity and for the reception of the unity order that the setting up of the Unity Forum is a vital necessity.

THE SPIRITUAL APPROACH

THE communal problem not only stands in the way of our political progress, it prevents our presenting before the world the Indian achievement—the working out of human unity. For it must be admitted that there is an Indian way, and that it is in this way that India solved her human problems in her long history.

In the same light of India's history, again, is to be answered the question of Indo-British relationship, which should serve as the basis of the larger synthesis of the East and the West. On Britain and India rests the task of forging the cultural bond between Europe and Asia, of widen-

ing the affections of the human family. And the spirit that worked through the long line of humanists from Edmund Burke to C. F. Andrews is surely still at work, for the great tradition of Britain cannot but produce her great men for the accomplishment of this great cause.

Our Hindu-Muslim problem has run deep down into the whole scheme of life of the two ancient peoples. If only they were true to their heritage, they might not only improve their own affairs but also give a lead to the modern nations at this juncture of world's history. Truly, the Indian technique of humanism and the arts of peace have a vital use for a world now desperately fighting its way to a solution of race relations. We are thus sadly failing in our duty to ourselves as well as to the world at large. It may sound conceited, but in fact it is something for which we have to be utterly ashamed.

The cultural, social and historical unity of the peoples of India was at one time normal. Seldom did people bother about these relationships. That these are questioned today indicates the shaking of the very foundations of Indian unity. It amounts to a negation of the very best of Hinduism and Islam in India. The questioning of our fundamental unity is far from a case of simple scepticism. We have been dis-

tracted by illusion. The feeling of a common lot, before it grows well into a conviction, is scared away by the illusion of our antagonism. Illusion is the issue of darkness, and it lies in ambush along the haunted tract of our mind. It will clear away as soon as the light is lit.

It is dangerous when false notions appear as facts of life. Arguments fail where obsessions prevail. The political and economic logic of common nationalism can hardly be listened to as long as there is the psychological background of communal distrust. However much possessed we may be of the political technique, we build ill if we forget the human base of our national existence. And that base is to be rendered compact by means of such spontaneous goodwill as will recoil even from thinking in terms of antagonism.

Unfortunately, our past history, as we read it in schools, shows us in a wrong perspective. All care is bestowed on teaching that we were enemies. It is, however, not told when and how the enemies came to terms and joined hands in building the composite Hindustani civilisation. Our education does not help to open our eyes to the common cultural heritage of Hindu-Muslim India. On the contrary, it hypnotises us into the belief that throughout these historic centuries we only sought to destroy each other, and thus it

indeed, the only solution of the communal problem. The long chain of Sadhus and Sheiks of the middle ages had brought about an agreeable synthesis, and had made their message fully realised in the lives of the people—Hindus and Mussalmans. From the days of Sultan Hussain Shah of Gaur to those of Raja Rammohan Roy there has been in Bengal continuous adoption of the values of comparative religion. Saints were not alone in the field. Master artists, in the various spheres of literature and art, moved in the realms of common creative inspiration. No country in the world has dived so deep into the problem of race relations as India had done till but recently when the forces of separatism have been let loose upon us. It is comparative culture, starting right from the spiritual down to the social life and forms, that is India's unique and inspiring tradition. It can be overlooked or neglected only to insure the death of our national life.

Yet the historical records of the centuries in which we have been growing together—thanks to false and dishonest history—have been the source of tormenting factions. The seeds of antipathy have been laid so deep that Indian Mussalmans appear to hark back at their ultramontane culture and Hindus at their Indo-Aryan. It is a queer irony of fate that they agree only to reject the legacy

of the period of their united culture—the glorious culture of the Indo-Islamic period. Misled by perverse sympathies they refuse to follow the logic of the history of this great period, which should ordinarily have carried to them a rousing message of unity. There is little space here to go into the topic. But I must urge all to join in appealing to our Universities and educationists that in any plan of reuniting our peoples not the least important is to 'decommunalise' the history of India.

This history when objectively studied will have no tale to tell us of communalism as it obtains today. Let us only take a test case—the case of the last of the Great Mughals. With a born Ruler's vision, Aurangzeb realised the danger of disintegration ever threatening the central imperial authority. The dilettante ways of his father and grandfather that had brought about an atmosphere of laxity in Delhi made him an austere ascetic by reaction. He was upset at his eldest brother's aversion for state-craft, whose non-Islamic bias he began to hate with a bitter hatred. With a stern hand he set to strengthening the State. He concentrated on a chosen band of strong followers. Very soon his fears were realised. He found the paramount Mughal power assailed on all sides by Mussalmans and Hindus alike. Bengal,

and the larger question of national well-being will retire into the background. This tendency arouses the dark mist of mistrust in which is being wrecked our bark of common economic endeavour. By the law of things there will ever remain some kind of economic competition. Hindus and Hindus, Mahommedans and Mahommedans, will ever go on trying to outgrow one another. In the same way, a Hindu and a Mahommedan may be rivals. As long as the individual only is reflected in the conflict the issue remains simply a moral one; but when the communal complex comes in, the clash is transformed into a national calamity. Again, if by some freak of event, economic competition is set at rest for ever, communalism—if that mentality is there—will continue to create its cleavage, as it does now between wealthy members of different communities. Besides, who will fix the limit to competition and what will be its standard! The attempt at setting right our economic relations, in so far as it is a question of balancing the different limbs of our body politic, will have primarily to take account of our communal mania, the diseased state of mind that strikes at every phase of life with pre-determined ill-will. At the same time, our learned economists should help simple folks to define national economics. There is a tremendous amount

of loose thinking about it. How far communal fears have been raised by real economic rivalries and how far, again, it is for stable economic peace that the communities should co-operate—these are questions that can hardly be left to speculative fancies.

It is in the very make-up of politics to divide. Whose politics? And at once there come individuals, classes and communities for special safeguards. It will be like that as long as the nation ideal is not vivid enough. And the issue becomes still more complex when we add the word—'interests'. For, interest, again, in its very nature is sordid, and therefore a source of struggle. The same holds good of economic interests. The moment the thought of interests flashes across the mind, we start looking around uneasily. There again—whose interests, which to be safeguarded and which to be surrendered, and why? Besides, economic issues are not the same everywhere. In Bengal, it is pointedly Hindu-Muslim, in Bihar, it is pre-eminently Kisan-Zemindar, in Bombay it is worker-employer. Without a common background how are these several interests going to be reconciled?

The common national objective depends on the widening of the circle of politics, economics and mere interests. This widening is apparently

a matter of outlook, which in its turn is one of steady and quiet cultivation. The communal, the kisan, the labour—all these and similar other units are but so many outlooks personified. These units have to be gradually converted to one whole national harmony, these outlooks have to be merged in the whole national vision.

Meanwhile, we have to be patient with the hesitant units. A community may honestly hesitate to sacrifice its own interests for a nation yet indeterminate. Before cursing any as a traitor to the national cause we will have to give enough time for the national conviction to grow. It is a common bond of sympathy that alone can form the basis of national faith. But what do we see instead? A vehement love of short cuts. This is evident, on the one hand, in our getting absorbed in the study of the methods of crowd suggestion, and on the other, in our helpless preference for clever stage management rather than the solid work of reconstruction.

Culture acts quite differently. It straight-away unites. Lovelier still, it has no interest to serve, save the pure one of enjoying together a thing of beauty. A good poem or a good picture, a good song or a good joke immediately unites the audience through one common artistic emotion. Be it a Kashmere shawl or a Benares brocade, a

Lucknow *thoomri* or a Jeypur *qalam*—all good things great and small will at once take all people present up on a common plane of joy. Culture has not to wait or weigh. It readily begets the feeling of oneness by virtue of common appreciation. A give-and-take of cultural commodities naturally yields the easy attainment of basic union. Culture and communalism cannot exist together, at least in India with its long history of a common cultural endeavour and a common cultural heritage.

There is yet another group of critics who accuse religion. And some of them, with a lot of reasoned conviction, feel that by taking to communism we can do away with communal religion and communal economics at the same time. Yet communism but shifts the ground of conflict from the community to the class. On the other hand, it is open to a man to say: 'If elimination of religious belief is essential for nationhood, I do not want political salvation at the cost of my life eternal'. The point is, religion will stay though religiosity must go. Religion being strictly a private deal between man and his Maker, it should be confined to a privacy that is all its own. A public and bombastic parade of spiritual passion is almost indecent.

To us in India, it is by no means a new thing to seek a common spiritual outlook, which is,

of the period of their united culture—the glorious culture of the Indo-Islamic period. Misled by perverse sympathies they refuse to follow the logic of the history of this great period, which should ordinarily have carried to them a rousing message of unity. There is little space here to go into the topic. But I must urge all to join in appealing to our Universities and educationists that in any plan of renmiting our peoples not the least important is to 'decommunalise' the history of India.

This history when objectively studied will have no tale to tell us of commnnalism as it obtains today. Let us only take a test case—the case of the last of the Great Mughals. With a born Ruler's vision, Aurangzeb realised the danger of disintegration ever threatening the central imperial authority. The dilettante ways of his father and grandfather that had brought about an atmosphere of laxity in Delhi made him an austere ascetic by reaction. He was upset at his eldest brother's aversion for state-craft, whose non-Islamic bias he began to hate with a bitter hatred. With a stern hand he set to strengthening the State. He concentrated on a chosen band of strong followers. Very soon his fears were realised. He found the paramount Mughal power assailed on all sides by Mussalmans and Hindus alike. Bengal

Bijapur, Rajputana and Mahratta countries announced their intentions loud with war trumpets. It so happened, however, that Sivaji won while Isha Khan of Bengal and Adil Shah of Bijapur fell. The victory of the Hindu protagonist was readily availed of by British historians whose business was, at the time they were writing, to win over the majority of Hindu India to the glittering dawn of the British rule over the gloom of the Muslim régime. These historians have managed to build upon the success of the Hindu protagonists a huge communal myth whereas what happened between Sivaji the Great and Aurangzeb the Great was only a political outcome on both sides. Communalism, as such, is not a product of the past. It is modern disease, brought about by modern environments. A supposed ideological antagonism between the peoples has been manufactured by propaganda history. This process still continues though in a very insidious form under the garb of the introduction of Swaraj in India, the form of separate electorates.

The clearing of the shadow-sides of our mind that frown upon each other as entirely and eternally alien will let in light to the humanistic vision of our struggle for nationalism. Our communalism is only want of understanding. It is a false fear creating a subtle suspicion. It is taking

appearance for the truth. It is not a reality but an illusion. It disappears with knowing that it does not exist. And knowledge being power, we shall easily be able to overcome any tricky communal suggestion by interested persons, the moment we get a glimpse of the carefully hidden truths of our cultural history.

Want of mutual confidence is at the root of the communal conflict. Confidence being entirely a matter of the mind it can hardly be established by political tactics. A political settlement can never bring about a lasting feeling of amity. On the contrary, exclusive management by politics may give rise to issues more complicated and bring out evils hitherto unsuspected. The necessity of the situation is not to somehow tide over the present trouble but to grow in our minds a power to resist the forces of disruption.

Confidence can be regained by one simple and sure though slow method of love and sacrifice. Real unity can rest only on the pedestal of fraternity whereas a political compromise only focuses attention on sordid interests, only sharpens our greed to gain at the expense of others. Inspiration for sacrifice comes when there is the unmistakable feeling of inward relationship.

This relationship can be realised by broadening the mind and by recognising mental affinities.

Then will there be the functioning of love and regard between the communities. There must prevail human affection for its own sake—not merely for achieving any political end. To be united must be the primary urge; to get self-government will follow. Human interest in one another will have to precede political interest. The solution of percentages cannot dissolve our fear of each other, the fear that lurks behind our anxiety for safeguards.

It will not do, however, if we want merely to be inspired by statistics and supported by percentages. History has hardly any sanction that a purely arithmetical move has got the better of morbid misgivings. Rather, history, particularly in India, teems with evidences that by cultivating cultural affinities different peoples have been welded into a national whole. This is hardly disproved by the fact that Hindus and Muslims have quarrelled, for then Muslims and Muslims have quarrelled no less, even in this country.

We must get at the psychological background of the communal tangle and adjust our internal relations regardless of any question of opportunism. Our relations can be brought home to our mind by emphasising common platforms. But there is a difference between platforms—ephemeral or real—yet to be constructed and those which

have existed for centuries. The cultural platform is a factor of living life, inherited and accumulated through centuries and is visible to the naked eye, while political unity represents a platform whose ideal is projected into the future and which is justified only by the existence of a common culture. Culture is the substance of nationalism, and patriotism is loyalty as much to the culture of the country as to the earth which the country is made of.

Centuries of hard and honest work have been put in to build up this cultural unity, which even now functions in the affairs of every-day life in every house and in every village amongst members of all communities—very unlike the synthetic unity preached from public platforms.

If we want political unity as a practical proposition we must have it raised on the firm foundation of mutual affection and unity of mental outlook. An elaborate programme of work has to be carried out on the home front on comprehensive (comprehending religious, social and economic issues) lines before any political formula can be of any real use.

An atmosphere of constant suspicion and fear dividing brother from brother is depressing in the extreme and hardly conducive to the growth of a national idea. An environment must be created,

an institution must be started where we can seek refuge from this atmosphere and contemplate on the innate oneness of our outlook and culture. We have many and elaborate theatres—political and economic—to measure strength with the Government. Could we not have something to educate ourselves to get at the background of the cultural unity of India? For, from cultural unity to political unity is but a few steps.

An Institute of Cultural Fellowship in India, where different communities may freely meet to correct, compare and exchange cultural values, makes an admirable provision for effective action. By the nature of things cultural action cannot be more concrete than this. For, the utterly hard yet easy task that culture alone can do is to hold the light. If to hold the light is vague, well, let it be vague. Indeed, what great things are not vague? Is not the ideal of nationalism itself sweet in its vagueness! What, in fact, must not be vague is our attitude of mind towards communalism. Communalism must be realised to be repulsive to our cultural instinct, to our sense of the good and the beautiful, to the whole trend of our history. Last though not the least, this Institute shall have no political programme as such. It will have little to do with the political personality or technique of any of its members.

This, however, is clearly assumed that only he can be a member who dreams of India as one, undivided and indivisible.

India is pre-eminently occupied today with the problem of her fulfilment as a self-governing nation. Conflicting conceptions of the problem have produced communal conflicts. And the latter, again, is reacting on the former, with the result that conceptions are getting more muddled and communalism more obstinate. To attack a problem with heat is often to put more life into it.

The need is felt of something to help in the creation of a psychological atmosphere in which one may with detachment look into the point of another. The influence of the atmosphere cannot be exaggerated. To appreciate opposition is the way to a solution. We need atmosphere to give us the required frame of mind and the perspective of vision, as also the sense of proportion of the various issues in the make up of the problem as a whole.

The political issues have been on the forefront for a pretty long time and have practically monopolised the whole national outlook. A people to live must have politics, but politics must not possess the whole of life. Nor is economics all we want. Without bread and butter it may well be

impossible to live but it is not worth living, while the life of the mind languishes.

Of the mental life the essence is culture. It is not to be confused with civilisation—the one is of the spirit, the other is of matter, what we are more than what we have, an expression of personality rather than a commodity. Indeed, the visible signs and symbols of civilisation do often hide a withered culture. It is culture that is bequeathed to posterity, to history, from generation to generation of a people's life. It is Shakespeare where all Englishmen meet. All human problems are basically cultural.

India's problems are manifold. But the political aspect of her national problem is at the moment naturally more prominent. She wants to have her political life defined. That definition only suggests a content which is variable. The content is rich or poor, vital or decaying, as the life of the people is spiritually alive or dead. The economic problems call for a planned endeavour. But in all planning a vast lot of expenditure is to be made with no anxiety to make the investment paying straightaway. Non-economic motives must operate largely, as the very foundation of a nation is social and cultural. To build the life fund of a people a very great deal has to be spent on health and education, food and recreation, which do not

pay directly but pay in the long run, by nursing the spirit of the nation. On ultimate analysis, the ends are not economic but cultural. Conventional reason, feeling, desire and passions are not competent to organise. Contemplative reason here steps in to scrutinise the means and bring detachment to bear on the task of organisation.

Racial and communal problems seem insoluble for the simple reason that racial and communal ego holds the field. When we are able to discount the limitations and partialities, the preferences and interests that underline the area belonging to me and to mine, to my group, my class, my race, when we are able to transcend the specific limitations of my world, then alone do we come in communion with the world of man.

And, India must defend her tradition. For tradition is the embodied progress of a people. Man must be reminded about his past, which is not really past but is a running stream of continuity. Past traditions co-operate substantially with the present environments in moulding the future aspirations. It is loyalty to this past that gives a trans-personal memory without which one cannot be linked to the historic achievements of the nation which one is a part of.

If a people have a living tradition it does not fail to supply inspiration to meet emergencies and

historical reminiscences, humorous sketches and one-act plays will make a good beginning. Educational films for school boys and open dramatic performances for the masses will also serve well.

Simple books are to be written on the lives of the *Bhagats* and *Derwishes* and places of pilgrimage where unsophisticated country people of different communities pay united homage. Care should be taken that it places faith on a pedestal of rationalism while being in real sympathy with traditions. Here the Institute gets contact with the masses directly. And, student members may derive active experience, should they, during vacations, think of co-operating with the masses in holding folk fairs and festivals and arranging for sales of cottage crafts therein. It must be emphasised, though out of place, that the problem of the educated youths and the masses is to be conceived and solved as one.

The foundation of education is cultural. It is essentially an organised human endeavour to assist Nature in the making of man. The task is pre-eminently that of treating the mind, disciplining the senses and generally aiding in the transformation of the human animal into a spiritual being. At one time, in all countries, education was conducted by religious heads. To-day it is entirely the concern of political leaders.

If so, why should not education be obliged to take in hand the living problems of politics? With the increasing strain on our communal relations, it has become a vital necessity that the young scholar must be brought up in an atmosphere of mutual understanding. I lay a good deal of store on communicating the cultural heritage of the Hindu-Muslim contact through properly graded textbooks from degree courses right down to the lower classes in schools, so that the tradition of unity may soak its way into the heart of the whole younger generation. The young scholar must be taught the art of living together, which in the politics of today is the most vital of problems. He must be given right from the start the type of education that makes him the true citizen of "the India of the future, an India at peace within and without, . . . a united nation, not turned in upon herself, but holding out her hands to the East and to the West, . . . an example to Europe and to the world of a country embracing men of diverse races, tongues and creeds in a single polity."¹

The social side is not less important than the educational. There must be reunions of members for the proper functioning of generous

¹ Sir Maurice Gwyer, *Address at the Convocation of the Benares Hindu University, 1939.*

social sympathies on a basis broader than personal friendship. Over and above the reunions, there should be organised a lively festival all throughout India, once a year, on a chosen historic day. The festival may partake of something of the *Holi* and something of the *Nauroz*. In as many ways as possible, the festival should be full of the bright significance of the social and cultural, national and ethnological, relationship of the races in India. While on the one hand, the Institute will initiate tremendous heart-searchings through intellectual studies into the cultural heritage, it will, on the other, lay out the picture of our inner relationship on the romantic background of a joyous celebration.

FAITH OF A CULTURAL HISTORIAN

TWO outstanding facts face even a casual observer of Indian affairs, foreign domination and the schism between the two major communities. Some think that the two are not unconnected. Far be it from me to prescribe any remedy for the first. My interest in practical politics is somewhat remote. To me the second fact is much more fundamental, much more vital

than the first and requires much more concentrated attention on the part of my countrymen. The reason is obvious. Foreign domination is always the result of misdeeds committed in the past. I can go even so far as to assert that foreign domination never comes until it becomes inevitable. It ends automatically when the people as a whole cease to deserve it.

As that condition has yet to come in India, it is futile and superfluous to declaim against foreign rule. The real task before us is to prove ourselves, and to none but the Supreme Judge within. And there can be no better proof than setting up unity in India. Quite adversely, communal feeling has been permitted to reach such a pitch today that the most ordinary civic, economic and educational activities of a civilised people are becoming difficult, if not impossible. It is not necessary to cite instances. We all know them. We cry ourselves hoarse about democracy and nationalism, and yet do nothing seriously to bring a united nation into existence. My political creed, I can sum up, I feel, in a dozen words : Freedom is God's gift to a united people ; no earthly power can withhold it from a people united in mind and heart.

We cannot afford to fall out with so much to do before us. We cannot, yet we do. And the

tragedy is that during the whole period of communal bitterness and strife there has been constant, almost persistent, chatter about unity, amity and understanding. From time to time the politician has flung out his pathetic appeals too. But all chatter and all appeals have so far proved ineffectual. We must try to understand why. Is it because the bulk of educated Hindns and Muslims have suspected these wordy effusions to be hollow, even dishonest, or is it because the methods pursued have been of the wrong kind? Mere skill in language will not do when 'the heart is obtuse'.¹ And, in a matter of the heart, it is really no use appealing to self-interest. 'Understand with your heart', as Jesus says. Adjustment wholly on lines of self-interest makes matters worse by emphasising unduly our communal ego and its selfish claims, the two obstacles to our attainment of a nobler life.

What is this nobler life? What is the great end which humanity must achieve one day? The key word is harmony. We all know it, but the knowledge does not do us any good, for in practice we constantly deceive ourselves and live in a chaos of unrelated rhythms, of antagonistic ambitions. With a great show of intellectuality we reject higher values and go on repeating with wise

¹ Isaiah vi, 9, 10.

nods that as long as human nature is what it is we must restrict our field of survey to the mundane realities, as if in a whole scheme of life the several realities are isolated. I refuse to recognise that man, whom God made in His own image, should ever accept ungodliness as his guiding principle. I have little faith in that politics alone can produce unity, and no fear whatever that appeal to spirituality weakens our cause.

Surely, a higher motive, a higher principle runs through the affairs of men, even though in our blindness we see it not today. My approach to the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity is in the light of this higher principle—this nobler destiny of mankind. Let brother meet brother, if for nothing else, at least to dream a golden dream of their great past and their still greater future.

It can hardly be denied that the motive behind communal misunderstanding in this country is unelevating in every way. Economically, our communal tension is prompted by dangerous half-truths. We have to correlate our wants and find out what wants we all have in common. Economic needs with reference to the country as a whole have to be specified and a joint effort made to meet them. Where does the Hindu or the Muslim as such come in? Politically, the conflict betrays a mind unable to catch the new notes of progress.

And it becomes all the more painful that at a time when political and economic egoisms of modern powers are engaged in a frenzy of self-destruction, we should refuse to come under the only influence that may save us, even go a long way in remedying the ills of a too selfish world. It is the spiritual influence of the Eastern religions—the common heritage of the Hindus and Muslims of India. The light of our diversified unity would shine serenely on us if we could but lift our heart to the message of Kabir :

“Hari (Vishnu) is in the East, Allah is in the West ; Look within your heart, for there you will find both Allah the Bountiful and Ram. All men and women are his living forms.”

High-sounding words cannot conceal the fact that our communal estrangement has not been brought about by any misreading of lofty ideals. On the contrary, it is not a matter of mistake, but of abuse. We have been consciously sordid and extremely sordid in our pursuit. It is the result of a scramble for jobs and power. Religion is not in it : nor is culture.

Some say that our cultures are so essentially different that no reconciliation is possible. Others urge that the economic position of the Muslim is different from that of the Hindu. On the first point I have often reiterated before that there is

not only nothing innate in either Hindu or Muslim culture which can justify a long-drawn inter-communal struggle in defence thereof, but also that as a matter of fact there has been in existence now for centuries a common and composite Hindu-Muslim culture, which had had for its exponents a galaxy of poets, saints, musicians, painters, sculptors and architects of both communities. It gave birth to a common language of remarkable flexibility and a common literature. The second plea is well-nigh meaningless. Class-consciousness and communal consciousness cut right across each other, and both cannot be true at the same time. And if one of them is to be accepted the division as employers and employees, is more scientific than such sectional groupings as Hindus and Muslims. There are capitalists and landlords as well as labourers and peasants in both communities. Further, do Muslim and non-Muslim merchants buy and sell at different rates and react differently as a section to a particular commercial situation?

Instead of doing any real work for national amelioration we are recklessly, I would even say, shamelessly, wasting our time in mutual recriminations and formulating phantastic political schemes which would cure all our ills. Short sight and false realities go merrily together and the dust

raised by the mutually exclusive interests, one clashing against the other, blurs the vision of the not very distant point where these must meet and merge. The blatant voice of the self-seeker and the opportunists drowns the too delicate voice of harmony, in other words, that of humanity.

It cannot be gainsaid that humanity transcends nationality and that man is greater than any label he may stick on his forehead. I would not go so far as to call nationalism a chimera or a snare. But it is undoubtedly a mere stage, a half-way halting house in the evolutionary march of humanity towards its goal. What is your goal, pray—the politician would ask. My answer is clear: god-hood, a kingdom of heaven on earth. This kingdom belongs as much to the Muslim as to the Hindu, as much to the Christian as to the pagan. The future of man is glorious, gorgeous. It belongs to everybody. Why should we not visualise it even today, even in the midst of the carnage and wanton destruction!

If indeed India is to be a nation let her avoid the mistakes of the West, let her not like the tiger or the hawk prey on lesser animal life. All this is possibly not practical as the word is used by the great ones in public life today. But my reply is: stick to the noblest ideal, it is never impossible, never unpractical. A Christ or a

Buddha is practical enough, more practical perhaps than a Talleyrand or a Bismarck. The Europe of today should be enough to demolish once for all our wretched practicalism that "Honour consisteth only in the opinion of Power"¹ or that vices are to be extolled as "those which are real", while virtues are to be turned down as "imaginary things".² The right conduct lies in this direction: "It is the business of the State to establish the background in which alone the good life can be lived by its citizens . . . the end of politics is to be found in an activity beyond politics".³

The States in ancient India, whether within an Empire or not, used to function politically more or less as separate units. But that was in no wise inconsistent with the essential oneness of the peoples of India. Scriptures and temples, festivals and socials, music and poetry united the whole of India. The ideal of a vast empire for securing efficiency of administration and for exploitation was not the one that old India held dear. Her technique of unity was, on the contrary, the spreading out of the human soul in search of kinship. Though there was enmity and amity,

¹ Hobbes—*Leviathan*, ch. x, p. 44.

² Machiavelli—*The Prince*, ch. xv, p. 129.

³ Joad, *Philosophy of Our Times*.

war and peace, between States and States, for personal and dynastic reasons, the people as a whole took but little interest in these. The ideal of a king and a Kshatriya was always pitched high, and not seldom was it attained. The Kurukshetra war was not followed by any Versailles Treaty. The Pandava victors, on the conclusion of the war to set up the kingdom of righteousness, renounced all possessions and set out on their great journey to the everlasting abode.

Yet one is compelled to admire the inexhaustible life force of Europe in her tireless experiment with the form of human association. Nationalism is long being vigorously tested in her laboratory of war. Nations have been going in for more and more wars, involving more and more nations in a single war. Meanwhile, nationalism has been changing its character. It has got rid of autocratic rulers and evolved Democracy and enunciated the broader principles of self-rule. Even this technique is today on a severe trial :

“At any rate you have only to look at one of the political monthly or weekly papers or to read a serious book on politics, and you will see that there is a general feeling that democracy has failed or is failing.”¹

¹ Leonard Woolfe, *What Is Democracy?*

Parliamentary government or representative system too is being seriously questioned. Not only imported English models have not proved suitable, even England herself is seized with scepticism. A century ago Parliaments were regarded as the patent remedy of all ills and now they are suspected to be the source of some of them.¹ The moral principle of democracy is indisputable, but from time to time its technique must be reformed and readjusted to the changing needs of a progressive world.

The present struggle between democracy and fascism but represents the fact that fascism is an inevitable, though misguided, revolt against a failing democracy. It must be realised, why was the loyalty of a vast number of men and women alienated from democracy to dictatorship? No doubt, totalitarianism, in effect, says that the individual is no more than a bolt or a screw in the State machinery, no more than a mere subconscious cell in the body politic. This altogether ignores the obvious fact that the individual is the key of evolution. Totalitarianism is a wrong application of biological truths to human affairs. In the case of lower animals, evolution proceeds according to type; in the case of man, the thinking

¹ Grant and Temperley, *Europe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, p. 598

animal, evolution is an affair of the individual thinking unit. But this faulty biology apart, something is radically wrong with democracy itself. Totalitarianism must be acknowledged as a malign reaction to an infected democracy, which must endeavour to gain greater immunity by a process of self-purification. Democracy must behave itself so that dictatorship may be deprived of the logic of its existence. Democracy's battle is won as its improved ideals, more than its arms, conquer the minds of misguided men and women.

Politics has failed to keep pace with science. Military power has been mastering ever new technique of supremacy, industrial machinery is invading every domain of man and Nature, while politics, for a whole century, is whirling round and round the concept of nationality, unable to take a step forward. Militarism and industrialism will continue to explode as long as nations choose to live on rivalry and refuse to live in an order of mutual fulfilment. Only when there will be evolved a universal human community, resolving rival nationalism, can the gifts of sciences be consumed wholly for constructive peace, having none to fight with.

During the Islamic régime, particularly at the time of the Moghuls, Sufi and Bhakti cults

struck the same chord and attracted the whole of India to the religion of love. Then the reply to the Hindu-Muslim question was a Kabir and a Nanak—an Adil Shah and a Dara Shikoh. To many minds Aurangzeb and Shivaji typify the clash between Hindu and Muslim interests, Hindu and Muslim ambitions. They forget the clear evidence of history that both these monarchs were in their habit of thought and action ascetics, for whom personally the allurements of power, wealth and beauty did not exist. The deeper student of political history recognises in Aurangzeb the champion of an India-wide empire and in Shivaji the champion of local freedom. Each was a puritan in thought and each followed his own ideal to the total exclusion of every other consideration. In the long history of India we come across more than one Hindu Aurangzeb and more than one Muslim Shivaji.

The history of medieval India shows numerous illuminated sign-posts, the sayings and doings of Bhagats and Derwishes, pointing with unerring fingers to the path of human unity. And both communities breathed in a familiar atmosphere, for they were like-minded. Though one called on Iswara and the other called on Allah, all prayed to the great God and all held godly things dear. There was no conflict in the fundamentals. It is

recognition of this fact that recently made His Holiness the Khalifa of the Ahmadiyyat issue an appeal that all religious communities should partake in the Prophet's Day celebrations and that similar celebrations should be held by his community in honour of the founders of all religions. The same mentality was at the back of the yearly appeal of the great world poet Tagore on the Prophet's Day.

My object is to deliver communalism from politics and give it over to culture for redress. Mankind is sick of separation. Men are eager to come together. Everywhere this is the feeling. Yet now more than ever politics abound. Love and hatred are both working in full force; only the progress is not uniform. Disarmament and rearmament are walking side by side, often exchanging embarrassed looks. The iron age is long gone by; ours is the age of irony—and all around us is the din of cruel contradictions.

The fact is, we are just aware of the danger but we cannot overcome the greed. We have the wisdom but not the force of character. Habits are so difficult to overcome! This no manœuvring can help. Only the rediscovery of religion can give the unhappy world real peace. A rehabilitation of worn-out religion will be worse than useless. We need a fresh discovery of the religion

that will make us new men. And that must be the religion of Humanity.

Its arrival has been heralded. A world fellowship of faiths is afoot. Its footfalls have been heard. The human commonwealth is gaining ground though developments in this have been and are bound to be slow. It is better that it should not grow hurry-scurry. And the reconstruction must not be suffered to be faulty. The structure will fall with a crash if any hollow is left somewhere inside. There is fear of that happening, for due attention is not being paid to India.

If a country like India remains what it is or goes farther down the alleys of communal separatism, it cannot do so without hampering the progress of the human commonwealth. It will hang round the neck of the world like a log of wood and impede the general advance. If it lags behind, it will drag back the rest and react on their morals. The gloom that is gathering in India is bound to cast a deep shadow far beyond its borders. For even without being a power in world politics, India is a unique figure in world culture and an unavoidable factor in world peace. Those who are trying to build up world federation have to take India's communal trouble as an integral part of the world problem. Those who are seeking to ~~salvage~~ human civilization have a moral duty to India.

Goodwill must be active. Wishes must be made real in acts. Something must be done, and right now, to assist us to a better understanding of the divine purpose which has brought Hindus and Muslims together in this ancient land. Let us wake up to a sense of fairness and justice and grant to others what we claim for ourselves. Let us tune our hearts to the eternal harmony of the universe and rise above pettiness and strife between brother and brother, sons of a common mother. It is time we realised that our blindness is leading us to an endless bog, a treacherous morass. In behaving as we do, we are up against the course of Evolution and courting disaster. Nature invariably pushes into the scrap-heap such as fail to come in line with her own evolutionary march. Do we want to pass into the scrap-heap or do we want to bear the torch in the onward march? The choice should be clear. There is a power above us, watching us, guiding us, heartening us. Let us be true to that power and realise :

“We build in vain unless the Lord build with us.”

